

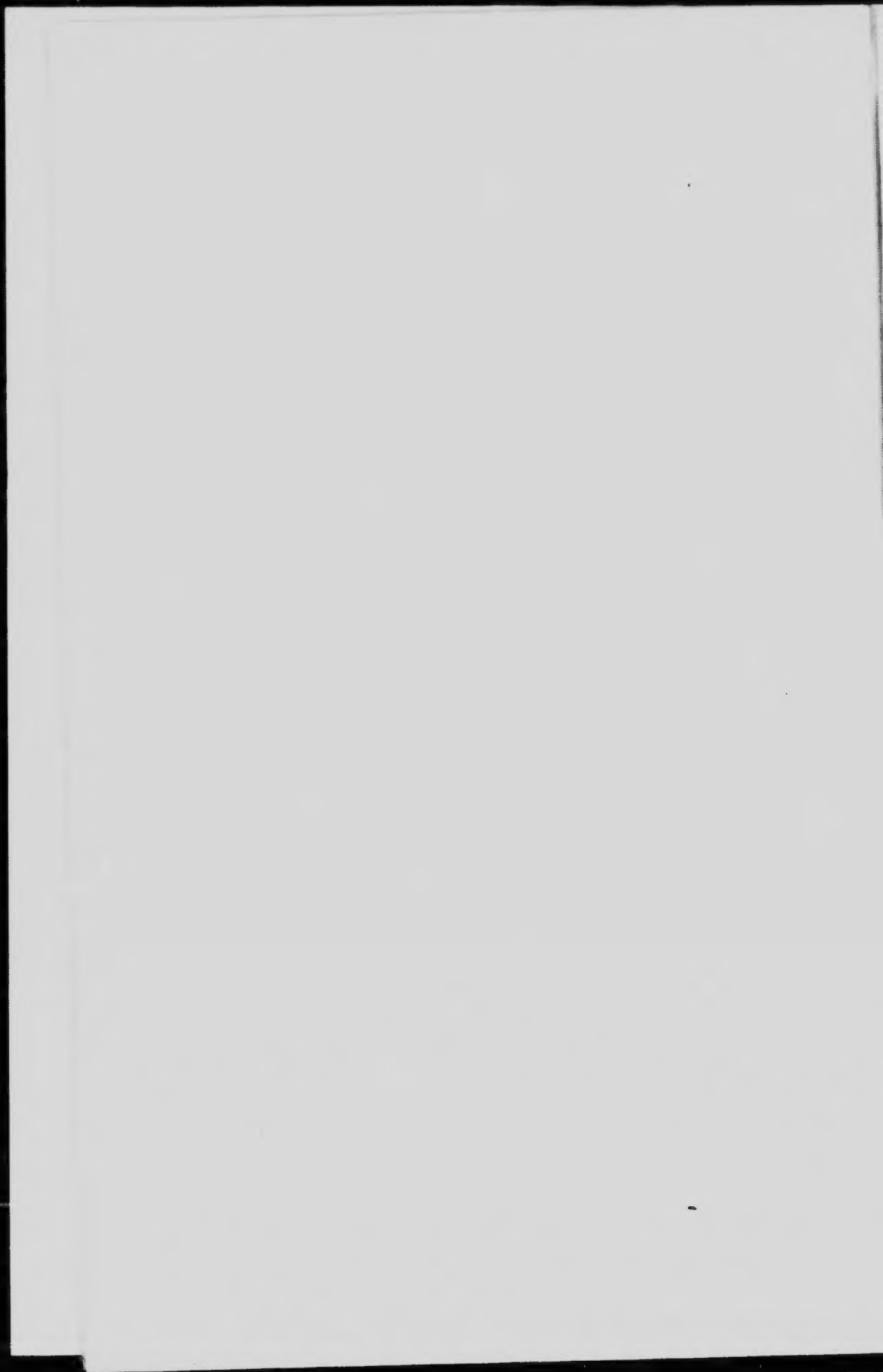
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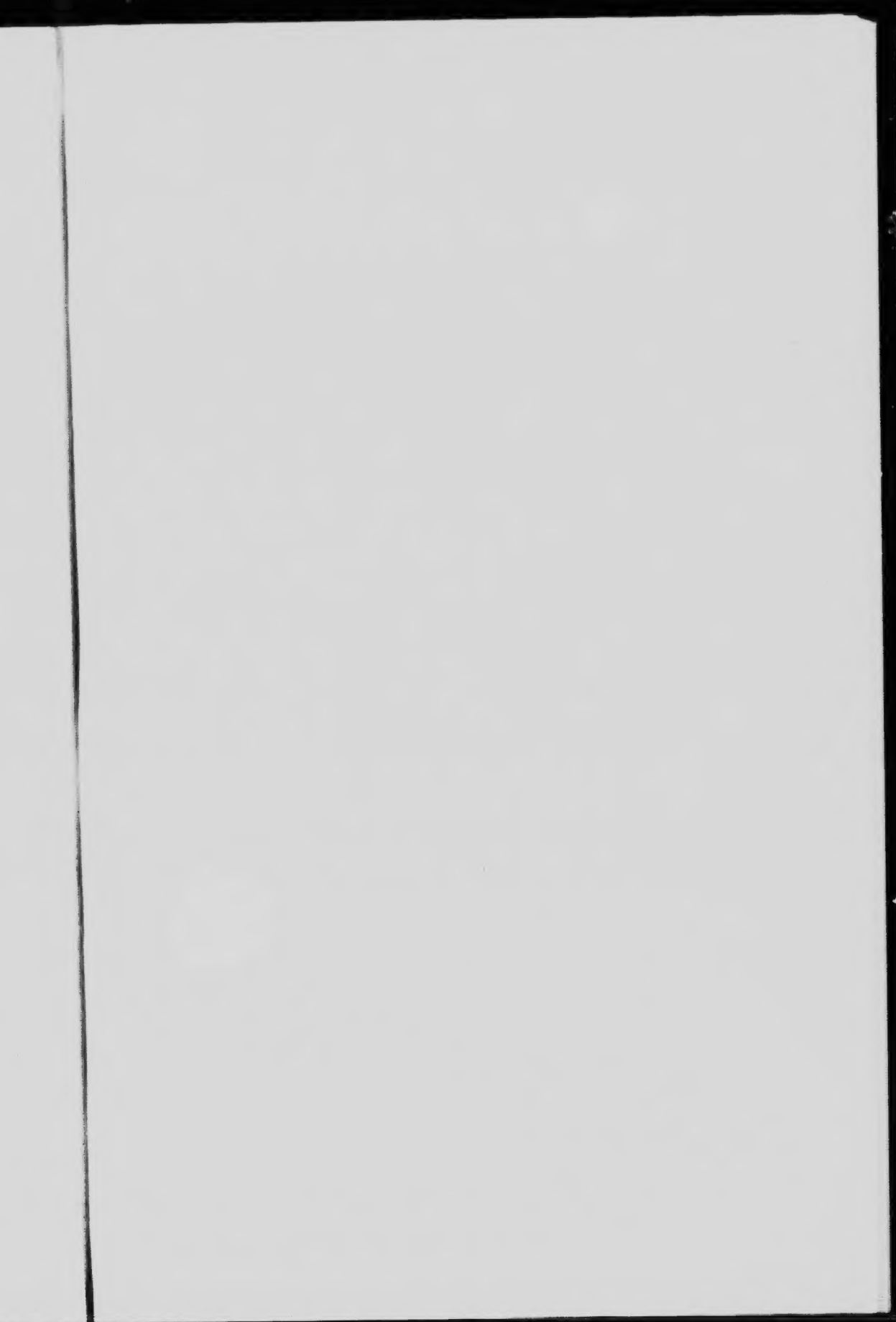
**Twenty Studies in the Way
of Life for the Young**

By S. T. BARTLETT

**TORONTO:
THE METHODIST BOOK AND
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

1918





The Young Christian

**Twenty Studies in the Way of
Life for the Young**

BY

S. T. BARTLETT

**General Secretary of the Department of Sunday
Schools and Young People's Societies
of the Methodist Church.**

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PREFACE.

The purpose of this little book is to provide for the use of parents, ministers, teachers, and class leaders, as well as for individual study by the young people themselves, a series of lessons in Christian Living. The need of such a book has been expressed in many ways, and the aim of the writer has been to meet the wishes of those who have asked for a Course of Practical Instruction in the essential doctrines and duties of Christianity, especially as they relate to the formation of character and the direction of conduct in the young. It will be noted that no attempt has been made at theological definitions after the ordinary style of a catechism, nor must the studies be considered sermons. The Memory verses are not texts in any such sense but have been selected simply to assist the young student grasp easily and quickly the principal truth under consideration. While the book can, of course, be best handled by a living teacher to give oral and additional instruction, it is hoped that the studies will be sufficiently lucid to ensure an intelligent reading by the young people themselves. With this double purpose in mind it will be seen that various forms of the pronoun have been used throughout. With sincere affection for all the

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Lord's little ones and in the hope that they may better understand their relation to Him and the blessed consequence following a loyal obedience to His supreme will, this book is sent out on its simple ministry of education by the author.

S. T. BARTLETT.

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I.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

"And it came to pass . . . that the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."—ACTS 11: 26.

As long as we can remember we have all been familiar with the word "Christian," but perhaps we have never stopped to think that there was a time when it was not known, or to ask how, or why, or when it first came into use. We learn this from Acts 11: 1-26. (Read it.) The Memory verse given above is the end of the story.

HOW THE NAME CHRISTIAN BEGAN.

When our Lord was on the earth He went from place to place teaching the people. Thousands heard Him and many listened attentively and became learners. He called them "disciples," which means pupils or students. After Jesus went back to his Father, these disciples, some of whom you remember He had called Apostles, kept telling others about Him. For this they were severely punished and some, like Stephen, were put to death. Many of the rulers hated the very name "Christ" and wanted it forever forgotten. But the disciples could not forget, nor could they keep silent. They went up and down the country "witnessing," that is, telling others what they knew about Jesus. Great numbers joined their ranks until they became a very large company.

In the city of Antioch, in Syria, there was great excitement. Hundreds accepted the new religion, and the news of the movement spread far and

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wide. Some of the proud and scornful people in this gay city scoffed at the name of Christ and made light of His disciples. In sport and mockery, and as a kind of nick-name, they called them "Christ-ians," meaning that they belonged to the man called Christ. If you spell the word this will be clear to you. In contempt, these vain and foolish folk of Antioch said, "O you! You're only a Christ's man, and he was crucified and is dead. We despise you and laugh at your religion."

So we see how this name—*Christian*—which we have learned to love and prize as the noblest anyone can bear, began as a term of reproach and scorn. We shall now study its meaning.

WHAT BEING A CHRISTIAN MEANS.

Being a Christian is a matter between Christ and you. Whether you are a Christian or not depends on whether you are His or not. And as soon as you are able to choose, whether you are His or not depends entirely on your own will. Christ never compels anyone to follow Him against His will, but He wants all to do so by their own choice. We must always remember, therefore, that it is one's own personal relation to Jesus Christ that determines his Christianity. When thinking over this matter for yourself, say first, "I cannot be a Christian without Christ"; then, "When I choose Christ I shall begin to be a Christian"; and then, best of all, say, "*Because I have chosen Christ I am a Christian.*"

But we must enquire as to what it means to "choose Christ," for many seem to consider it a very hard and difficult thing when really it is easy. Study these three simple steps, all of which you will see you can take with little trouble if you are in earnest.

We have *minds* and can *think*. We read about Christ. We hear others tell about Him. And as we think of what we read and hear we can believe it.

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We must know, and we cannot know if we do not think. So we are able to say to ourselves, "It is true," and then to Christ, "Lord, I believe." This means that we intelligently accept Jesus as our Saviour because we thoughtfully admit His claims for Himself as well as His claims on us.

We have *hearts* and can *love*. A mere intellectual belief is not all. As we read and think about Christ we come into communion with Him and see in Him so much that is lovely that our affections are drawn out towards Him, and we cannot help loving Him for His own sake and not just because He has loved us first. Many people do not love Christ because they do not know Him, and they do not know Him because they do not think enough about Him. Love is the great motive that makes a Christian, and the more we love Christ the easier it becomes to follow Him, and the closer we follow Him the more we shall love Him.

We have *wills* and can *obey*. Obedience to Christ is the real test of Christianity everywhere, whether in a person, a family, a city or a nation. We may have large knowledge of Jesus and may feel a sweet sentiment towards Him, but if we do not really obey Him we are not His disciples. He said, "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments" (John 14: 15), and again, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (John 14: 21).

These then are the three things that are meant in being a Christian: (1) The assent of our intellect, (2) the consent of our affections, and (3) the obedience of our will. You will understand these more clearly when you are older and wiser, but even a young child can say, "I believe in Christ," "I love Christ," and "I will obey Christ," and these three things are all He asks of us.

WHAT BEING A CHRISTIAN DOES NOT MEAN.

It does not simply mean that we *believe something*. There have been many books written about

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Christ and men have argued and argued about Christianity. They have made creeds and catechisms, doctrines and dogmas, and have written histories almost without number. All these have had their place and value, but we may accept human opinions and believe what men have said and written about Jesus Christ and not be Christians.

It does not simply mean that we *do what we think is right*. A Christian always wants to do right, but there are many people who think they are right when they are really wrong. And many people do things that seem to be right, but they do them from wrong motives. We shall understand this better when we study about the Bible and Conscience, but do not forget that one may pride himself on his outward right-doing and still lack the only true spirit that can make a Christian.

It does not simply mean that we are what is commonly termed "*good*." We may be honest, kind, generous and upright, and may speak the truth, and yet not be Christians. We may observe the Sabbath Day, attend Church, go to Sunday School, read the Bible, say prayers, give money, and even be members of the Church, and yet not be Christians. A true Christian will do these things, but just the doing of them does not make anybody a Christian.

It does not mean, either, that a boy or girl must first *become very bad* and then be converted. God does not want any child to grow up into a bad man or woman. It is a dreadful mistake to think that you cannot be a Christian unless you first become very wicked. Some of the very best Christians that have ever lived have never known just when they first began to follow Jesus, but have loved and served Him as long as they can remember. Our next lesson will teach more about this. Meanwhile, be very sure that no matter how young or small you are, *you may be a Christian now*, and that you surely are one because you *believe, love and obey Jesus*.

II.

HOW THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN SHOULD GROW.

"And the child grew, and waxed strong, becoming full of wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.—
LUKE 2: 40.

Our Memory verse was written of the infant Jesus. As the little child grew into a boy, "he advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2: 52). Away back in history we read that Samuel grew until he became the greatest man of his times. "And the child Samuel grew on and increased in favor with Jehovah, and also with men" (1 Sam. 2: 26). Of the little babe who became the great John the Baptist we read, "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit" (Luke 1: 80). Paul wanted that the boy Timothy who had started to grow in wisdom at his mother's knee should "continue" until he became a strong and capable leader. In his wonderful letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle tells them how they "may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ (Eph. 4: 15). And the Apostle Peter in one of his letters advises, "As new-born babes, long for the spiritual milk . . . that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2: 2).

Such passages were not written simply as biographical facts regarding Jesus or Samuel or John the Baptist or Timothy or the early Christians. They announce great principles that are as true of this twentieth century as they were long, long ago. They show us that God wants all His little ones to grow into wise and good, and become useful, members of society.

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GOD OWNS THE LITTLE ONES.

At the very start we must know that God owns the little ones. Every baby in all the world belongs to Him. No baby ever born has belonged to the Evil One and all who have died in infancy have gone back to God and Eternal Life. If those who die go to God, those who live should be kept for God.

What Jesus himself taught about the little ones is told in several places. Here is one passage from Mark 1: 13-16: "And they were bringing unto him little children, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come to me; forbid them not; for to such belongeth the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them." Surely there can be no mistaking the meaning of these words, but it would make a wonderful difference in many young lives if all the professed disciples of the Master to-day really believed them and acted accordingly.

HOW GOD WANTS HIS LITTLE ONES TO GROW.

All life grows by obedience to the laws that the great Creator has made. God's laws are everywhere. They govern the flowers, the trees, the forests, the fields; the tiniest insect and the mightiest mammoth, the smallest child and the greatest man, all are subject to them. Obedience to law means more life, disobedience brings loss. It is true in our bodies and equally so in our souls. In seeking to know how God wants us to grow we must remember that his law of life is supreme, and it must be our highest aim to keep that law in all that we do. So we are not going to lay down a lot of rules to live by but see if we cannot find some few really vital things to help us. Think of

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a little baby. What does he need? Many things more than we are going to name, but here are five that he must have, and remember, he needs just such things for his moral as for his physical growth.

1. A little child needs *air*. He needs it as soon as he is born, for the first thing he does is to breathe. Without air he would soon stifle. We are learning more and more the value of fresh air, and we are learning, too, how important it is to have a good pair of lungs to breathe with. Unless our bodies have a plentiful supply of pure air all the time, our health is soon affected. Now, just what the air we breathe is to our bodies, the moral atmosphere in which we live is to our souls. We must keep our thoughts pure, our desires clean, our hearts right, if we would have strong, healthy, spiritual natures. We must not go where there is moral poison any more than we would go thoughtlessly into a room filled with deadly gas. Be careful of your inward soul life just as you are of your physical life, and you will not suffer as so many thoughtless boys and girls do who do not know what it is to "watch." It is in this that prayer wonderfully helps a young Christian, for through it we breathe the pure atmosphere of God's love, and that is the most wholesome of all for every one of us.

2. The growing child needs *food*. If he does not get plenty of it he soon begins to pine away in weakness. You know how you like to show how fat the baby is, and you know, too, what big appetites growing boys and girls have. It keeps father and mother busy most of the time providing for a hungry family, but they do not complain, because they know that a big appetite and good digestion both make for health and strength. Now it is just the same with our spiritual natures. We must have good food, have it in plenty, and have it regularly if we would grow into strong and robust souls. The Bible is food. Worship is food.

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Spiritual companionship is food. Think of the ways you can feed your soul, and remember that if you do not nourish it well with the Bread of Life you will suffer just as surely as if you do not feed your body with physical bread.

3. The little one needs *light*. How the little eyes dance when baby sees the sparkle of the sunbeams or the reflection of the lamp. You have seen him fairly wriggle to get hold of them, haven't you? People are learning the value of sunshine more and more, and there are not as many darkened rooms as there used to be. This is good. But our souls need the light, too. And light means knowledge of the Truth which comes only to those who learn. That is why you should study, for you cannot live and thrive without searching out for yourself some of the deep things of God.

4. A growing child needs *exercise*. The baby in the cradle must stretch his limbs or they will not grow strong. When he is able he must learn to walk or he will not be able to run. And what would a boy or girl do without play? You know you can play for Jesus just as well as you can pray to Jesus. But we need exercise for the soul as well as for the body. And we ought to find lots of fun in it. We are too apt to call it work. If we took more real joy in exercising ourselves unto godliness we would not find religion a burden instead of a blessing. We must find our highest joy in service.

5. We all need *rest*. Baby must sleep a lot, growing boys must spend lots of time in bed, and what rest is to the body meditation is to the soul. Christ often went apart to think serious thoughts and hold communion with God. So must we. We must never be too busy to spend some time every day alone with our Lord, for in meditation and prayer we shall find great strength for all life's duties. Jesus grew into a very busy man, but He found time for quiet hours with His Father, and was the stronger for them.

III.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND GOD, HIS HEAVENLY FATHER.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven."—MATTHEW 6: 9.

"When ye pray, say Father!"—LUKE 11: 2.

The oldest questions men have ever asked and the hardest they have tried to answer and understand have been concerning God. So we do not wonder that the disciples of Jesus asked Him to teach them how to think of God and how to pray to Him. Jesus said, "*Say Father.*" Men had been studying about God for ages but they had not learned to come to Him one by one and call Him by this familiar and beautiful family name. It was to reveal God the Father that Jesus came to earth. The best and wisest men had examined the marvelous world of Nature and had said, "It is very great and an Almighty Creator must have made it." They had studied history and had said, "Mankind is very wonderful and an All-wise Governor must be controlling it." They had felt that righteousness was very beautiful and sin very dreadful and had said, "There must be a pure and holy Being speaking to our consciences." They had had high and noble longings and said, "There must be a kind and gracious God calling to our spirits." Other men, neither wise or good, had said, "There is no God; why bother about it at all!" while more said, "There are many Gods, one is as good as another; worship which you please!" So it was into a very strange world of human thought and action that Jesus came, because men did not really know God. When His disciples asked Him about God, Jesus said, "God is One, and He is Father." Read Matthew vi and you may count twelve times where He used this word "Father" when explaining to His disciples about God. So if we

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can understand what the word "Father" means we shall know how best to think and speak of God.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD FATHER.

There is another word which we do not use as often but which we must understand if we are to know what "father" means. It is the word "sire." A father is a sire, that is he has given his nature to his child.

We read in the wonderful story of creation that "God made the beasts of the earth after their kind." But of man God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." All that has life came from God, but there is a vast difference between animals and men. Animals are God's "creatures"; men are His "children." Of animals we read, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures," while of man, "God created man in His own image." That means that every little child is much more than animal, for God the Creator-Father has given to His little ones of His own spiritual nature, and each one is "a living soul." Do not make the mistake of saying that a child has a soul. He is a soul and has a body in which to live for a few years only. That shows the difference between a sparrow and a son. Jesus said that if the Heavenly Father fed the little birds He would surely care for His children. The birds, and beasts, and fishes are God's "creatures" whose life goes out at death; but boys and girls are God's "children" whose life goes on forever. All get life from Him, but the life of His "children" is after His likeness, which means that God is our Sire or Father because He has given to us His Own nature. *Fatherhood means Sirehood*—transmission of nature

By sin this Divine nature or likeness in the

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Father's children is defaced but not destroyed. The Prodigal Son of whom Jesus spoke, lost his father's fellowship when he went away from home, but he never ceased to be a son. Boys and girls, men and women, go away from God but there is still a place for them in the Father's heart and home, and when they return He receives and welcomes them into all its joys and they become sharers with Him of the blessings of the family from which by their sin they had gone away.

Think of other things that the word "Father" includes. It stands also for *family government, authority, protection, care, provision and training.* The earthly fatherhood is in its truest sense a reflection of the heavenly and that parent best cares for his child who most fully resembles the Divine Father in all he does.

But above all, "*Father*" means *Love.* God's government of His family, His authority over His children, their training and discipline, His protection over them, His care for them, His all-gracious Providence however manifested in their behalf—all are because "God is Love," and Fatherhood means Love. How good the Father is to His children! But we must see what the children owe their Father.

THE CHILD AND THE FATHER.

If God is "Our Father," and we are to so address Him, we as His children must fill our place and do our part in His family. There is no fatherhood without childhood, and children owe much to their father. The first petition that Jesus taught His disciples to present to God was, "Hallowed be thy name." That tells us what we need to know. God's name stands for God Himself and to "hallow" means to make holy. This prayer then really is, "Father! May all our thoughts of Thee be holy, may our feelings, our

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desires, our purposes be pure in Thy sight; may all we think of Thee, all we say about Thee, all we feel towards Thee, all we do for Thee, be hallowed by Thee because Thou art our Father and we are Thy children." A boy's natural ambition is to be *like his Father*. He will not disobey the Father's commands, he will not disgrace the Father's name, he will not forsake the Father's home, he will not dread the Father's displeasure, because he has learned that by true filial love it is easy to maintain all the privileges and perform the duties of a son.

But if God is "Our Father!" and we His children, we owe something to one another. We belong to a large family and must try to do right towards all who are in it. Fatherhood means sonhood, and sonhood means *brotherhood*. All the social relations come before us when we think of ourselves as members of one great family of God's children all over the world. If childhood means love and loyalty to the Father it also means affection for the rest of the children. Jesus taught His disciples that they should love everybody, and do good to all. If love to God makes obedience easy, love to our earthly brothers and sisters will make kindness and help equally easy. So we not only have God for Father but man for brother, and we owe not only a great debt of love to God but a similar debt to man. And we cannot really love God if we do not love man. That is a wonderful passage in 1 John 4: 20, 21. Study it well as we close this lesson. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." So Fatherhood means Brotherhood and we prove our love to our Father by loving our brother.

IV.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND JESUS HIS SAVIOUR.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he it is that shall save his people from their sins."—MATTHEW 1: 21.

Of all the New Testament passages telling about Jesus, perhaps none more simply describes His real mission or will be more readily appreciated by the young than this Memory verse. The meaning of the name—*Jesus*—and the reason it was chosen are clearly stated. By studying these we may see what Jesus should be to our growing boys and girls. Recall what we have already learned, that it is one's personal relation to Jesus Christ that determines his Christianity, and the need of a practical knowledge of who Jesus is and what He does for His people will be very evident. So we must consider the three great facts stated in the verse quoted above.

1. The fact of *sin*.
2. The fact of *being saved from sins*.
3. The fact that *Jesus is the one who saves*.

The fact of sin at work in human hearts, and in the world of human society is so self-evident that it needs no proof. *Sin abounds*, and wherever it came from or however it began, it has done dreadful damage everywhere and everybody has suffered from its power. The second fact of *being saved from sinning* is also apparent. Millions of people have been saved, millions on the earth now are saved, and millions more might be saved if they only would. The third fact that *Jesus is the one who saves* has multitudes of witnesses who have proved just what Peter preached,

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"And in none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4: 12). These three great facts confront us every day, and while there may be many theories about each, it is the practical application of the underlying truth we need to present, so that by our young folk the sufficiency of Jesus as Saviour may be appreciated and experienced.

SIN AND SINS.

We know that sin is in the world everywhere, but it is not with the sin of the world in general but with his own sins in particular that the young disciple will naturally and properly most concern himself.

Every little babe comes into the world innocent of sins but with his own capacity for sinning. There is a tendency toward good and an equally positive tendency towards evil in every little life, and whether the one or the other shall become the stronger, depends on the relation the growing child is taught to take towards Jesus Christ. No little baby is bad, but every little baby may become bad and will become bad unless Jesus keeps him good. Sin is in the world, the tendency to sin is in the child's life, but he need not live to multiply sins innumerable and become a bad man.

The work of Jesus did not take sin out of the world, but it did show how the dreadful guilt of the sinner might be forgiven and how the awful power of sin over his life might be broken. So our chief concern in this study is not to examine any of the many theories of sin and reconciliation, but to find out how to overcome the power of *sin* in our own hearts so that we shall not go on accumulating a great number of *sins* in our own lives. Only so can we know Jesus as a real personal Saviour.

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HOW JESUS SAVES.

1. *By Pardon.* As soon as a child knows the difference between right and wrong he makes choice of one or the other. If he chooses to do wrong he sins, for sin is intentional wrongdoing. All sin is against God, for it is He who has written the law of right on our minds and has given us reason by which to distinguish between the right and the wrong, as well as conscience to tell us always to do right and never to do wrong. Whenever a boy, therefore chooses to break this law of God he sins and becomes so far guilty and needing forgiveness. Then when he is sorry for doing wrong, he asks God's pardon and proves what millions of others have proven, that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John

9). Pardon, or forgiveness for the sins already committed is the first blessing every young child should seek, and Jesus is as truly the Saviour of a boy or girl as of a full-grown man or woman. But He saves in another way.

2. *By Prevention.* Pardon is not enough, because God does not take us out of a world where sin abounds when He forgives our sins. He leaves us here to help make a bad world good. As long as we remain on the earth we shall have to meet sin. Jesus said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from (out of) the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one (evil)." So we want to know by what power we may be kept from committing sins from day to day.

We know very well we cannot do it ourselves. Unless someone else help us we shall fail. Who is the one to thus help us? Jesus! How does He help? Not by keeping sin away from us, for we have to face it, but by making us strong to *keep sin out of us*. He will prevent us from

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sinning by making our wills so strong that we shall be able to say "No" to temptation, and by helping us to love Him so much that we shall not want to do anything contrary to His will. Jesus does not build a wall around our lives, *without*, so that sin cannot get to us, but He so fortifies us *within* that when sin comes to us we are able to overcome. He shows us that the habit of resisting sin makes us strong just as the habit of accepting sin makes us weak. You cannot do anything over and over again without getting into the custom of doing it. Good can become habitual as well as evil. Girls and boys can form the habit of obedience as well as of disobedience. Jesus does not perform some strange and wonderful miracle for us to keep us from sinning, but He makes us strong of heart to do His will every day and in all things. That is why we must study to know His will and pray that He may make us brave to do it.

Pardon and Prevention! These are the two ways by which Jesus saves "His people," and we have already seen that the latter ones are His. But while pardon makes a young child happy, prevention makes him strong and noble, pure and good, by helping him grow up to be a true Christian. It is far better for a boy to be pardoned and by the power of Jesus his Saviour, be prevented from growing up into a sinful man, than it is for him to go on sinning year after year, and then perhaps when he is old and about to die, seek forgiveness for his evil deeds. If Jesus is a great Saviour for the old, he is a greater Saviour for the young, for it is a grander work to grow a life like His than to save a soul from death. So, dear young friend, seek Jesus as your sufficient Saviour and He will both pardon your sins now and prevent you from sinning by and by. "*He it is that shall save his people from their sins.*"

V.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE COMFORTER.

"It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go away I will send him unto you."—JOHN 16: 7.

In the Gospel according to John there are recorded many beautiful conversations which Jesus had with His disciples. In these He told them many things about Himself and His Kingdom. They were talking over some of these great matters one day, when Jesus, referring to the future, surprised them by telling them that He was soon going away. They did not understand, but He made it very plain that He could not be with them always, and that in a little while He would go back to His Father in Heaven. This made them very sorrowful for they could not believe that Jesus would leave them all alone. They counted everything on His being always with them as their Teacher, indeed they were looking forward to the time when He would be their King. What would happen if He left them they could not tell, but without Him they would have no Leader, no Guide, no Friend, no Helper, no Master, no Lord. Everything would be a failure, all would be lost if He went away, but Jesus knew better and He explained how it would be in the days to come. He said that though He would not be with them as He had been, He would be with them in a better way. His body would not be in their midst, but His Spirit would never be absent. The work He had begun would continue and His disciples would never be left without a loving Friend and Comforter. He would not be with them to tell them what they wanted to know by His own spoken words, but He would still be with them in His Spirit as the

Great Teacher. We cannot understand this fully; but this much we can know. Just as Jesus was God in human form establishing the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth, so the Holy Spirit is God in spiritual power carrying on the work of the Kingdom from age to age. Though Jesus is not here for us to see or hear, He is still here for us to know and follow, and through His Spirit He is perfecting the work begun long, long ago.

WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES.

If we carefully study in John's Gospel, chapters 15: 26 to 16: 15 we shall learn from the Master's own words what the work of the Holy Spirit in spreading the Kingdom is. Three truths are taught there.

1. He is called the "Spirit of Truth" (John 15: 26), and His work is to *confirm* or prove the witness of the disciples concerning Jesus. Our Lord expected His followers to bear witness of Him. We have already seen that to "witness" means to tell what one knows. Jesus was to be made known to the world in all after ages through the testimony or witness of His disciples. That is our business still. We must tell others or be untrue to Jesus. But the bare word of Christians is not enough. Their witnessing is to be confirmed by spiritual conviction poured out from God. Such an outpouring was seen at Pentecost, and thousands of times since then similar spiritual influence and power have come from above. The lesson for us is that if we are to tell about Jesus with effect, we must have the witness of the Spirit to follow our words. The witnessing of the early Christians was attended with great persecution, but that did not weaken their words or break their spirits, because Jesus fulfilled His promise and sent the Holy Spirit to make them courageous and strong. It is so still. Every girl and boy needs such a Helper. Not

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all are called to witness for Jesus as preachers in the pulpit or missionaries in foreign lands, or even as public teachers; but at church, at home, at school, at play; by worship, by word, by act, by example; every day we are all called to be His witnesses in some way and He will always be with us to make effective all we do or say. The Spirit is our Helper.

2. Another work of the Holy Spirit is to *convict* the world through the proclamation of the Gospel (John 16: 8-11). If Jesus had remained here on earth as a man, He could not have gone everywhere at once making the Truth powerful to convince men. But by His Spirit He works on the hearts of people wherever His word is preached. This is why preachers and teachers in our own land and missionaries in every land can all make God's word known in power at the same time. If Jesus were a living man in human form as He once was, He could not be in America and Africa, in Canada and China, in Norway and New Zealand, in Jerusalem and Japan at once. Yet in these places and all others Jesus is at work through His servants preaching and teaching for Him in the power of the Holy Spirit. Do you see now why He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away!" The whole world needs the Gospel, but no one can preach or teach it successfully apart from the Spirit. That is why the Church must never depend only on her human agencies, or organized machinery, or material forces of any kind to do the work of Christ on the earth. His is a spiritual Kingdom, it is to be extended through spiritual forces, and the race will never be won for Jesus unless we have the Holy Spirit to "convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." All the Church needs His help, all may have it, and having it we cannot fail.

3. Another office of the Holy Spirit is to

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glorify Christ by *guiding* believers into more and more knowledge of the Truth. Jesus told His disciples that He had many things He would like to tell them, but they were not ready to receive them nor could they understand them. But His Spirit would enlighten their minds and guide them "into all the Truth." It is so still. No one ever knew all about God or His Kingdom or the mighty forces by which His works are carried on throughout the universe. Men are learning all the time. In many ways God is giving more light, more knowledge, more skill, and by His Spirit is leading men out into greater achievement for Him. Jesus said that because He was going to His Father and the Spirit was coming to carry on the work, His followers would do "greater works" than even He had done. Through the centuries that have passed since Jesus the Man of God went away, Jesus the Spirit of God has been doing such mighty deeds that we wonder how anybody can even question His presence and power on the earth. He did not teach all the Truth when He was here. He has not taught it all since He went away. His disciples of old could not follow Him all the way He would have led them. Nor can the wisest men explore the whole realm of Truth to-day. The Spirit has always been willing to teach but men have been slow to learn. However, little by little the mysterious forces of Nature are being revealed; little by little science is finding out how to utilize these for the benefit of the Father's great family everywhere; little by little the dreadful ravages of sin are being overcome and the bodies and minds as well as the souls of men and women, boys and girls, are being set free; little by little the whole world is being brought to know God in all His ways and works, and the Spirit is bringing in the glad day when "He shall reign for ever and ever."

VI.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND PRAYER.

"And it came to pass as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray. . . ."—LUKE 11: 1.

On the great subject of Prayer Christ taught by example as well as by oral instruction. His was pre-eminently a life of prayer. The disciples were frequently impressed by His practice, and it was when they were under the spell of His influence that they asked Him to teach them how to pray. Our Memory verse tells about just such an incident in their lives.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

To Jesus, prayer was first of all *communion with His Father*. The most natural thing in family life is fellowship between the father and his children. A father who does not want his little ones to come near to him to talk with him and let him talk to them in return, is not the kind of father that children can readily obey or really love. But all true fathers do want their children's fellowship, and because the father's heart goes out in love to his little ones he cares for them and desires their love in return. Jesus clearly said that if an earthly father thought in this way about his children the Heavenly Father would much more do so. When, therefore, we have learned to call God, Father, we cannot help wanting to go to Him for fellowship and communion. Christian prayer is different to all other kinds of prayer. To pray in some fashion is a universal characteristic of mankind, but because of their strange ideas of God, many people have had very wrong methods of praying. Many have thought of God as a cruel monarch whose wrath they had to appease, or as

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a hard task-master whose favor they had to purchase, or as a mighty unknown force from whose dreadful power they had to flee; and because of such crude conceptions of God millions of men and women have tried by dreadful penances and pains, by suffering and sacrifice, to worship someone or something they did not know. Only the Christian knows God as Father and comes to Him on the ground of childhood in familiar family conversation and intercourse. When a young Christian prays, therefore, he talks with his Heavenly Father and listens while his Heavenly Father talks to him. *Prayer is talking with God.*

It is by the practice of prayer in this sense that our knowledge of our Father grows and our likeness to Him increases. If, as we learned in our third study, it is our duty to be like our Father, we cannot do it by simply reading about Him or by listening to what others tell us; we must know Him for ourselves, and that is best done by coming close to Him in prayer. Praying thus, we cannot help growing like Him, and through communion with Him our characters become pure and godly and our lives reflect His teaching so clearly that there is no doubt about our piety. No person was ever "a great Christian" who did not pray much and often.

Prayer also means *petition*, that is asking something from God. Jesus prayed thus. He asked His Father for His presence and help, for His direction and guidance, that He might do His work in fulfilment of the Father's will. Before He chose His apostles, when he healed the deaf mute, by the grave of Lazarus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and on other similar occasions of need, Jesus prayed. He said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou heardest. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always." In teaching His disciples Jesus used the little word "ask" both by way of direction and

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promise. He told them, "Ask and it shall be given you." "Every one that asketh receiveth." "Your Heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," "If ye ask anything in My name, that will I do." If it was fitting that Jesus should acknowledge His dependence on His Father by asking, how much more is it for us to do so. And there is perhaps no more natural way for a child to show his gratitude for his father's loving care than by going to him and asking for whatever he may need. The child's request in the spirit of filial dependence and confidence makes it easy for the father to give. There are many things, and this is particularly true of all spiritual gifts, that our Heavenly Father can give only to those who are eager and willing to receive them. God cannot give His best without our desire and co-operation. Because He is Father He loves to have His children come to Him for what they need, and because we are children we naturally go to Him for what He alone can bestow. Childhood involves asking and receiving just as Fatherhood involves giving. And Jesus taught that because God is Father He will surely give what His children *actually need and ask* at his hands.

HOW SHALL WE PRAY?

The place of prayer is not local or limited, but wherever the soul of the child goes out in communion with the Father, there is a sacred shrine, a holy place, a sanctuary of delight. But Christ honored the local House of Worship. He visited the synagogues and participated in their services. He went up to the temple to the feast, and you remember that when in indignation at the pollution of that sacred place He drove out the impious traffickers. He said, "It is written,

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My house shall be called a house of prayer; but ye make it a den of thieves" (Matt. 21: 13). *Public Prayer in God's house* is still binding on us all and every young Christian should be regularly present at the services of the Church.

But Jesus prayed alone. Read carefully in your Bibles these passages: Matt. 14: 23; 26: 39-44; Mark 1: 35; Luke 6: 12, 13; 22: 43, 44, and you will see some of the many times when Jesus prayed in private, alone with His Father. We rightly join in public prayer in God's house, but we cannot know the wonderful transforming power of prayer unless we *pray in private*. Read Luke 9: 28-36, and note particularly the 29th verse. What happened "as He was praying?" It is true still, God will surely reveal the glories of the heavenly world to those who pray.

Every young Christian should cultivate the habit of private prayer by having regular times for going alone with God for meditation, spiritual communion, and definite personal petition. The Morning Watch means that at rising from the night's rest and before beginning the day's duties we spend some time in such a way. It is one of the best habits any young person can form. If you have not started it, do so.

But there are times when we cannot go to church, when we cannot be alone to pray. We need immediate help because of pressing need. That is the time when our hearts cry out to God in short, sharp call for instant help. On the street, in school, when tempted to do wrong, when liable to lose our temper, as we feel cross words rising to our lips, always and everywhere we may pray and God will hear and answer. That is the best of all kinds of prayer for us because it makes God's presence real and His help always within our reach, and it was in that thought and with that feeling that the Apostle Paul said, "*Pray without ceasing.*"

VII.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND HIS BIBLE.

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."
—2 TIMOTHY 3: 16, 17.

These words of wisdom and counsel were written by Paul to Timothy, and although they make quite a long Memory verse every boy and girl should know them by heart, for there is no other passage that so clearly sets forth the practical value of the Bible to the young. Paul was old, nearing the end of life; he was finishing his career and waiting to depart. Timothy was young, beginning his service; he was facing the future and preparing to do his duty as a man. Paul had known him as a boy, and wrote to him as a father anxious to see his son a strong man of God and a capable leader in the work of the Church. He told him that if he would be a complete man and well furnished for every good work awaiting him, he must fashion his character and direct his conduct according to the teachings of the "sacred writings," meaning the Word of God as it existed in that day. We to-day have more than Timothy had. Our Bible is bigger than his was. "Sayings" about Christ and letters written by the apostles have been added to the "writings" that Timothy read and studied, and now we have a whole library for our instruction. But the Bible is for our instruction in what? Let us see.

THE BIBLE A BOOK OF LIFE.

There are very many subjects treated in the Bible, but its one main purpose throughout is to teach people *how to live*. If we study it with

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any other idea in mind we shall not do it justice. Some people have thought of it as mainly to get them ready to die, and that is the biggest mistake any boy or girl can make. We get ready to die by learning how to live, and if you live as Paul wanted Timothy to live, and you may, you need not worry one bit about dying. Dying is only part of the process that leads to larger living. The Bible is rather a book for people who are going to live than for people who are about to die. For this reason it is more than any other a young person's book.

All forms of literature are in it and yet one great supreme aim runs through all—to teach us how to shape our characters, direct our conduct, and work out our destiny by the highest standards of righteousness and truth, and according to the will of God. So when we read the Bible, we need not be surprised to find that it contains history, philosophy, biography, poetry, songs, stories, sermons, prayers, and indeed every form of literary composition that you can think of; but the unity of the whole is not in its composition or authorship but in its great Moral Purpose. It is intended to teach people *how to live aright*.

PRINCIPLES RATHER THAN RULES.

But the young Christian must not go to the Bible thinking that it will tell him everything he ought to do. You will make a great mistake if you look in it for a positive rule for every act of daily living. You must not misuse it by searching for rules of conduct. You must use it aright by studying it to learn the great principles by which God desires all human actions to be controlled. Some people want the right or wrong of every deed proved from the Scriptures. Think how absurd this idea is. We are living in the 20th century and none of the Bible has been written since the first century. Everything has

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changed since then. Nations are differently composed and constituted, their forms of government are not the same, the social habits of the people, their styles of dress, domestic arrangements, and many other things are wholly different, the means of communication, methods of transportation—everything you can think of has been changed. How can one prove everything by the Bible when so many things we have and do and say were not even thought of in Bible times? For instance, we heard a man stoutly defend the use of tobacco not long ago because it could not be disapproved by any text of Scripture. Of course the Bible says nothing about tobacco, for tobacco was not known or used for centuries after the Bible was written. Automobiles are not mentioned in the Bible either. Was it, therefore, not wrong of that boy who drove a nail through my neighbor's tire the other day? Electric lights are not mentioned in the Bible. Was it, therefore, a right thing for that other boy to do when he threw a stone at the electric street lamp and smashed it? You can think of a hundred things the Bible does not tell you to do that you know you ought to do. It does not therefore make it all right for you to leave them undone just because the Bible does not say you shall do them. You see we must read the Bible sensibly, remembering always that while it does not tell us every single thing we should or should not do, it does teach us that we should do everything that honors and nothing that violates those great principles of righteousness and truth, of justice and mercy, of purity and virtue, of lovingkindness and charity, and all the rest of the high and holy virtues that are summed up in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ our Lord.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE.

1. *Study it.* The Bible books may be understood; but they cannot be understood without

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being studied, and the study must be after the proper method. Some people read the Bible at random without any purpose save to satisfy their consciences and perform an unwelcome duty. Such people cannot understand it. They do not intelligently examine it. Some take a few of the separate texts and pick what they seem to like best. They cannot understand it by this method, either. The division into chapters and verses, remember, is not the way the Bible books were first prepared. The Bible is not a vast collection of separate texts, and by taking one text by itself we often lose the meaning of the writer. Do not be afraid to read a whole chapter at once. Then you will soon be able to read a book through. But, whatever you do, remember you must *study* if you would understand.

2. *Pray.* The Bible calls for your very best thought, but you cannot study all the meaning out of it. It is like every other book in requiring intelligent research, but it is God's Book and we need His Spirit to enlighten our understandings and make us responsive to His teaching. Recall what we learned about this in our fifth lesson. The prayer of old must be ours still, "Open thou mine understanding that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Study and Pray! Study as if everything depended on your own application, pray as if only God could make His word plain. Then you will begin to understand and come to knowledge of the Truth.

3. *Obey.* This is the result of all true study and real prayer. "I will keep it with my whole heart," said the Psalmist, and if we would really know the value of the Bible we must be governed by its principles and shape our lives according to its teachings. Neither the intellectually lazy, nor the prayerless, nor the disobedient, can *know the Bible* as God intends it to be known; but if we *study*, *pray*, and *obey* we shall find in it all that Paul mentioned in his wonderful letter to Timothy. Let us try all three.

VIII.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND THE CHURCH.

"Seek that ye may abound unto the edifying of the Church."—1 COR. 14: 12.

There are three meanings which are given to the word "Church." We use it when we think and speak about the sum total of all who belong to Christ throughout the world. In his letter to the Ephesians (5: 23) the Apostle Paul refers to the universal spiritual body of which Christ is "the head." We use it, too, when we refer to all those people who hold to the same doctrines or beliefs and worship God after the same form, such as the Methodist Church, or the Presbyterian Church, or the Church of England. Our young people have been familiar with the word in this way all their lives. The "Church" also means the local assembly forming one congregation, such as "John to the seven churches that are in Asia" (Rev. 4: 1), or as the Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote and addressed his letters "unto the Church of God which is at Corinth." So there are very many individual and separate churches all over the world, belonging to different denominations; but from all, no matter what their name or form of worship may be, Christ has his Church. There must be local churches, because all people can never live in any one place; as long as people think differently on matters of doctrine, or forms of worship, or methods of organization and work, there will be different churches or denominations; but Christ has only one Church, and in it He numbers all who belong to Him, no matter who they are or where they live. This is a spiritual "body," and He is its "living head."

We have seen that all infants belong to Christ and form a part of his great universal Church. Because they do belong to Him we present them

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to Him in Baptism, which is the sign of entrance into His visible kingdom. Infants are not baptized to make them Christ's but as an outward and public recognition by their parents and the local church or congregation that they are already His, and that the Church accepts them to be instructed and trained as soon as they are able to learn all that Christ's little ones should know to keep them His forever. Never forget that every little baby is precious to the heart of Jesus, and that it is the Church's great duty to fulfil His command, "Feed my lambs," just as much as it is a parent's duty to "nurture" them in the Lord. Home and Church must work together to grow the right kind of men and women to do the work of the Church in the world.

But little babies are not babies long. You know how quickly they grow. Before very long they are boys and girls beginning to think about things, and quite properly and naturally they ask many questions about themselves and God. It is right to teach them from the first that they are God's little children, but when they want to know why, they should have it made clear that they belong to Him because He is their Father who created them, and Jesus is their Saviour who redeemed them. When the sense of right and wrong develops every child knows that he is able to choose one or the other, and soon he actually does so. If he is led aright he will choose Jesus to be his lifelong Friend and Saviour, and take upon himself the obligations and privileges of discipleship. Up to this time his parents have been nurturing him in the Lord, and the Church has been preparing him for following Christ; but now he must act for himself in choosing whether or not he will "continue," as Paul asked Timothy to do, or go away from the Church and refuse to follow Jesus. You remember that it was when He was twelve years old that the boy Jesus made up His mind fully that it was time for Him to

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give His whole life to doing His Father's will, and about the same age boys and girls still may intelligently say, as Jesus did, "I must be in my Father's house," or "I must be about my Father's business." When they do so decide Church membership means that they publicly acknowledge Christ as their Saviour and take their places among those who are banded together for instruction, worship and training in His service, as they could not do when they were little children. They are not really "joining the Church," for they have always been in it, but they are confessing Christ for themselves and taking on themselves the privileges and duties of Church membership.

WHAT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP MEANS TO THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN.

For boys and girls it means something less than for men and women, just because they *are* boys and girls and have not the capacity for understanding or the ability for work that men and women have. But it means at least this,—that the young Christian is going to learn how to reverently worship God and diligently work for Him. He comes to the Church not so much to do big things as to be trained for the doing of them later by having an opportunity now of doing such little things as he is able to do. The child Samuel "ministered" long before he became a prophet in Israel. Timothy was well reported of by the Church before he was taken by Paul for work as a missionary. The Church must instruct the young in the *Word*, the *Worship*, and the *Work* of God. Mark these three W's. And if it does, the boys and girls will learn, and, growing in knowledge, character, and skill, will become just the kind of adult Christians that Paul wanted Timothy to be. Do you remember what we learned about this in our last lesson?

Let us see now what you as a young Christian should give to the Church, for remember the

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Church cannot do all for you. You must unite with it, not only by giving your name, but in more ways than that. Here are four things the Church asks of you:

1. *Attendance.* It should be the practice of every young member to be present at the services regularly and punctually. Do not make excuses for not going to church, or you will soon get into the hurtful habit of staying away, and your interest will become less and less, until you do not care whether you go or not, and probably will not go very often, if at all.

2. *Attention.* Do not go to church thoughtlessly. Be reverent in the House of God. Laughing, talking, or even whispering during the services is not good. If you go for study in the school session, help your teacher all you can. If in the church preaching service, listen to the preacher. It will help him, and you will find that there is a lesson for you in his sermon.

3. *Assistance.* The minister only leads the worship; he cannot do all the worshipping. The choir only leads the singing; they should never do it all. The officers cannot do all the serving. Everybody should help. The church is a great workshop where there is something for everybody to do. Do your part. If you do not help, both you and the church will lose by your idleness.

4. *Affection.* All that has been mentioned before will be easy if you can really say, "I love thy Church, O God." Because many people do not love the Church they neglect its services, or if they go they do not enjoy them. They find work a drudgery and giving money a loss because they lack love. The secret of joy in church life is love—love to God and love for one another.

The work which Christ expects the Church to do is to save the world by making Him known as the universal Saviour. In that work there is a place for the young as well as the old to "abound to the edifying of the Church."

IX.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"This do in remembrance of me."—LUKE 22: 19.

As the end of our Lord's life drew near, and He knew that very soon He would be leaving His disciples, He desired to give them something by which they would remember Him and the meaning of the death He was about to die. He knew how easy it would be for them to forget if they had nothing to remind them of His living ministry, His dying love, and the meaning of the New Covenant to which His death would introduce them. So, when they were gathered together to celebrate the Passover, and they had kept the feast in accordance with Jewish law and custom, He gave them a piece of bread to eat and then a sip of wine to drink, and said, "This do in remembrance of me." Soon afterwards He went into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. While there He was betrayed, then taken out for examination and trial, was condemned and put to death on the cross. It was all very dreadful to His disciples, but after His resurrection and ascension they remembered their Master's words, "This do in remembrance of me," and at stated times they met together to keep this new Christian feast, just as they had formerly kept the old Jewish feast. They knew what the Passover had meant, and now they said, "Our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast" (1 Cor. 5: 7). So this new Feast of the Lord's Supper became to the Christian world all that the old Passover Feast was to the Jewish, and we observe it to-day as the memorial of our Saviour's sacrifice for us when He died upon the cross of Calvary. We eat the bread and drink of the cup to "proclaim the Lord's death," or, as St. Paul evidently meant,

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our faith in Him as our Saviour from sin. So every time we partake of this sacrament we remember (1) Jesus Himself as our personal Friend, (2) His dying love for us on the cross, (3) the blessings of the New Covenant which come to us through faith in Him. We cannot forget Him or what He has done for us in love if we observe His command, "This do in remembrance of me."

THE PERSONAL VALUE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Having seen something of the general meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper, let us learn some of the ways in which it is of real personal value to all, but especially to the young Christian. Here are three chief or principal benefits it practically bestows:

1. It helps to continued *love for a very real personal Friend*. Though Jesus departed from the sight and hearing of His friends, He is still always with His own. The Lord's Supper makes Him more than a sweet memory of one who lived long ago, then died and left the earth for ever. Jesus is not a dead friend for whose past life, with all its deeds of lovingkindness, we are thankful and of whom we have fond, yet unavailing, recollections. He is a living Friend, risen from the tomb and interested in everything that concerns His friends here and now and always. At His table we are reminded of that as we recall His own words, "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." We are not loving a memory, we love a *Person, Jesus*.

2. It helps us to *faith in a very real Saviour*. When the angel of death visited Egypt, the Israelites proved the positive value of the blood of the sacrifice sprinkled around and about their doors, for through this sign their homes were passed-over and they were saved. As they showed their faith by their obedience, and God was a very real deliverer to them, so is it with us and our Pass-

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over, even Jesus Christ our Saviour. The death of Jesus twenty centuries ago has some interest as an historical fact, but its value to the young Christian is in helping him die unto sin and live unto God. The resurrection of Christ, likewise, is of real worth to us only as it empowers us to rise with Him into heavenliness of character and the enjoyment of things that are above. So the Lord's Supper speaks to the young Christian and says: "You are going out into a world where temptation and trial await you; but you are not going alone. Your Friend and Saviour will be with you to guide and keep you in the way. Take Him with you and do not be afraid."

3. It helps us to *vigorous growth through partaking of very real spiritual food*. This is what the minister means when he says, in giving the bread to the communicant, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in thankful remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving." And, you remember, he uses similar words when he gives the wine. Bread and wine are only symbols, it is true; but they are symbols of a very precious truth by which we learn that the source and supply of all spiritual life is such a personal union with Christ that He abides within us all the time. When the bread and wine are accepted in faith the soul of the communicant receives the spiritual food of which they are in themselves the sign and the promise, and so is nourished and made strong.

THE SOCIAL MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

It is not only a season of personal remembrance and confession of Jesus as Friend and Saviour. It is a social Feast, a Festival, in which all believers holding a common faith may participate. It therefore calls to fellowship and unity among all who directly and together partake, and to a

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sympathy and spirit of comradeship with all Christ's people everywhere, for all Christians observe the ordinance after some manner or form. It reminds all who come together that it is not enough to call Him "Lord, Lord," but that He challenges them to go out in His name and hasten the day of universal deliverance from the ravages of sin and evil in the earth. The Sacrament is the Church's oath-taking, by which she swears allegiance to her great Commander. No Christian can truly communicate at the Lord's table with others without feeling the Divine call to fraternal charity and goodwill, to co-operative action in every good work, to go out and actually follow Him "who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed with the devil." As the whole world of human society is one universal brotherhood of need and peril, the fellowship of the Lord's Supper summons all who know Him as Friend and Saviour to go forth with supply and deliverance to their fellows everywhere. It is the young Christian's bugle-call to service.

HOW TO COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

Because so many feel something like superstitious fear of coming unworthily and eating and drinking to their own condemnation, a closing paragraph of counsel is deemed necessary. Our young people must not get wrong ideas of the conditions of approach to the Lord's table. There are but two that need concern them, (1) Sincerity, (2) Charity. Sincerity towards Christ and charity towards their fellows. Admission to the Communion is not a matter of goodness or merit or age or experience. It is not refused any who have a sincere desire to know and follow Christ. Do not remain away, therefore, but please Him who said, "This do in remembrance of me."

X.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD.

"And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."—
1 JOHN 5: 5.

A good deal of confusion sometimes exists in the minds of young people about "the world." They hear such expressions as "loving the world," being "worldly minded," "conformed to the world," "overcoming the world," and "putting the world beneath our feet," but just what it all means they do not know. Because a working understanding of this matter, so closely connected with daily living, is necessary if the young Christian is to live aright, this lesson has been prepared.

WHAT IS THE WORLD?

The following four ways in which the word "world" is often used will help us understand its meaning in Scripture:

1. *The Universe created by God.* "The world was made by him."
2. *The Human Family.* "God so loved the world that he gave . . ."
3. *The Intellectual realm of Thought.* "The world by wisdom knew not God."
4. *The world of Motive,* whether good or evil. "The Prince of this world . . ."

Or if you memorize these four M's it will help you remember the four great worlds we have before us: *Matter, Man, Mind, Morals.* We shall see that it is the evil in the last one, the world of morals, that we are to overcome.

1. *The Material world of God's creation in Nature is very wonderful* and we should live as closely to it as we can that we may learn to love

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it and reverence the infinite Creator who made it for us to live in. The works of God are all around us, and whether we study the sky, the earth or the sea, the boundless wisdom and almighty power of God are shown. How often we read such expressions as "The heavens declare the glory of God," "The earth is full of thy riches," "His wonders in the deep." They all call us to reverent study. The young Christian will be drawn nearer God if he gets out into the country sometimes to study Nature. All material things in this beautiful world in which we live speak of the goodness of God, and we should learn to use them all for His glory. The older girls and boys should learn Addison's hymn, No. 176 in the Methodist Hymn Book, and the younger ones No. 591. God's world is a good world, and we should thank Him that He has given us a place in it. The young Christian should learn to be among those to whom St. Paul referred, "that use the world as not abusing it."

2. The world of *Human Society is ours*, not to get out of but to live in. God "made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17: 26), and among this family, not apart from it, we are to live. We are social beings and God never intended that we should live alone. Boys read the story of Robinson Crusoe and think that it would be a splendid thing to have a whole island just for themselves, but if they had they would soon find what he found, that a little solitary world is a very miserable place. Jesus does not want His disciples to separate themselves from their fellows, but to live among them and with them as part of the great universal family of the Father. It was not this world of mankind that St. John had in mind when he wrote, "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2: 15). God did love the whole race.

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He loves it still and wants to deliver it from every evil. If we are His children we will love it too and do everything we can to show our love. The social world of the young Christian will get bigger as he grows, but even in youth he must learn the great lesson of social service and ministry to others. A later lesson will show how.

3. *The great world of Thought is ours.* Our minds belong to God, who has given us a brain with which to do our thinking. God wants to direct all our mental processes so that their exercise shall lead us into fuller knowledge of Him and make His vast storehouse of Truth ours. If the young Christian does not take his own place in this great world of Mind and learn to think aright he will become a slave to loose methods or wholly dependent on other people's thoughts. Of course a young Christian needs guidance in his thinking. That is one reason this little book is written; but he must learn to think for himself, to have a mind of his own, to find the "wisdom that cometh down from above," without which no one is really wise. *Think for God, and claim for your own all you can of the riches in His great intellectual world.*

4. We come now to the *world of Morals*, and it was in reference to this that the words of our Memory verse were written. We have already learned that there are two great forces at work in the world of human motive and action, and that even a child must soon come to the period of choice between them. Christ had to meet the evil one and overcome before He fully entered on His life's work. This is fully recorded in Matthew 4: 11. Our Lord's temptation is described as the deliberate and wicked suggestions of the Devil, or Satan, the great spirit of evil who is represented always as the enemy of every Christian, as St. Peter wrote, "your adversary

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the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom withstand steadfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world" (1 Peter 5: 8, 9). Those are really wonderful verses for us here, because they tell us that not to one person only but to all who are in the world the adversary comes to work out his evil designs. Jesus speaks of him as coming and going, as when He said, "The prince of the world cometh, and he hath nothing in me" (John 14: 30). How can we learn to say something like this to the tempter when he comes to us to lead us astray?

OVERCOMING EVIL WITH GOOD.

There is a splendid bit of advice given in Romans 12: 21, which reads, "Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good." This does not only apply to our treatment of those who have not been kind towards us. It announces a great principle that works out in our own hearts and lives if we give it a place when the struggle for the supremacy of evil over good takes place. To simply believe as a fact of doctrine that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God," will never in itself make us strong enough to overcome. But to let Jesus Christ with all His power of good as the Son of God fill our hearts, means that there will be no place in us for the evil one. It is the positive force of good that drives out the evil, and when *good* rules in our hearts we give no consent to Satan when he tempts us. Remember that Satan is nowhere represented as omnipotent but Christ has *all power*. Satan's purpose to destroy therefore, may always be broken by the conquering help of Christ's Spirit. The spirit of evil need not, it cannot rule our lives if we make Jesus Christ our King. By Him we "overcome the world."

XI.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND TEMPTATION.

"And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."—MATTHEW 6: 13.

In this lesson we shall try to learn what our Lord meant when He instructed His disciples to use the petition stated in our Memory verse. To understand His meaning we must know what is implied in the word "temptation."

WHAT TEMPTATION IS.

The word has two meanings, a good one as well as a bad. Young Christians generally think of it only in the latter sense, but temptation is not always bad or harmful for us. Its influence and effects are determined by its nature and the attitude we take towards it when it comes before us. A young Christian's character largely directs his attitude towards temptation, just as temptation helps to form his character. Now look at the word itself.

To "*tempt*" means to try, to test, to prove, to probe, and it is not correctly used only when applied to solicitation to sin. It has a noble meaning. In reality all life is a temptation, for all thoughts and actions test us. We are on trial every day. So we have come to speak of life as a Probation. No day finds us wholly free. Every day is a judgment day.

But our Heavenly Father sometimes submits us to unusual testings or temptations. Even Jesus was not exempt from such. His Temptation, to which we referred in our last lesson, was out of His ordinary routine of daily experience. It was an unusual occurrence. But it proved His character, and by it He has shown how even we may

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stand the extraordinary trials that may come to us in the way of duty. Think of the temptations (testings) to which many of the best men of whom you have ever read were subjected—Abraham was proved to be a man of exceptional faith and obedience by the temptation which came to him when he was told to offer up his son Isaac. His faith and obedience were tried but he stood the test. God tested (proved) Job through great losses and sufferings, that His faithful servant might disprove the statement of Satan that no man would serve God from disinterested motives. Paul was tried by the "thorn in the flesh," which he called a messenger of Satan to buffet him, and in the testing he proved the sufficiency of the grace of Jesus Christ His Lord. In all ages God's children have in various ways been tried, tested, proven, *tempted*, and God tests even us.

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray "Bring us not into temptation," He instructed them to ask their Heavenly Father that in His Providence He might not subject them to such unusual trials that they would be unable to stand the test, that the unexpected and heavy burdens of life might not overwhelm them. It was really an expression of their own personal weakness apart from His help, an admission that failure would result if God did not sustain and deliver. So the petition for deliverance from evil is added. When we pray thus we show a distrust of our own strength that is good. It may seem to the young Christian that there is no present need for such a prayer for life looks very rosy and bright and troubles seem far away. But all thoughtful young Christians have their own peculiar testings even now, and the attitude taken towards them even in youth will go a long way to making strong men and women to endure in the later temptations of adult life.

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FACING TEMPTATION.

There are differences in the attitudes taken by even young people towards temptation. A boy is sometimes inclined to be boastful, and when he is face to face with the invitation to sin may be disposed to say, "I can quit it if I want to." A girl sometimes feels proud in her sense of self-sufficiency and says, "There is no danger about me." But we are all in danger if we do not seek help from above. One of the most common failures with young Christians is to over-estimate their own strength. Another is to under-estimate the power of their spiritual foe. It is not good for us to feel too sure of ourselves, for we may act like Peter who said, "If all shall be offended by me, I will never be offended," and afterwards said to His Lord with an oath saying, "I know I will not deny the man." Peter did not stand the test of loyalty to Jesus because he depended on himself. We shall surely do likewise unless we prove the truth of St. Paul's noble words, "The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and guard you from the evil one" (2 Thess. 3: 3). Yes, all temptations test character and character is strengthened by right attitude towards temptations as they come day by day. If we face them aright and bravely endure life's trials in the help of our Lord and Master we shall grow like Him, but if we do not we shall be weakened and suffer serious loss. The most important question, therefore, for the young Christian is not "Shall I be tempted?" but "What shall be my attitude to temptation?"

"WATCH AND PRAY."

No one knew better how to advise than did our Master, and these are the words He used when warning His disciples about temptation. But they mean a lot more than many young people seem to think. "*Watch!*" Surely that

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means "*Think!*" if it means anything. Yet we are apt to be thoughtless. One of the common excuses young Christians make for doing wrong is, "I didn't think." "*Be wide awake!*" Surely it means that too. Jesus warned that the enemy did much damage "while men slept," meaning that if we would save ourselves from his wiles we must keep our eyes as well as our minds open. "*Decide!*" That is in it too. How often a young Christian says, "There's no hurry," and by postponing some action finds himself in great danger of sin. It is easy to make excuse, but excuses ought not to be made, and would not be if we only observed our Lord's counsel. "*Pray!*" We know what that means—talking with God. And we have seen that we can do this always and anywhere and so find the help we need to do what is right and well-pleasing in His sight. "*Watch and Pray!*" If we watch that we may always be where our Heavenly Father wants us in the way of duty, we may be sure that we shall be where He can assist us in the way of help. Let no young Christian forget that. It is useless to go where we know we should not be and expect God to keep us from the evil. We should not willingly enter into temptation. We do that when we experiment with sin, when we trifle with good, when we say "Just this once," or "So and so does it," or "I couldn't help it." There is a splendid verse that I marked in my Bible when I was only a boy. This is it: "For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (Isa. 50: 7). If we face temptation in its lower sense like that, our Heavenly Father will see to it that His temptation in the highest sense will make our characters strong and noble, and we shall find His deliverance from evil to be a very real and positive blessing.

XII.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND CONSCIENCE.

"The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, searching all his innermost parts."—PROVERBS 20: 27.
"Their conscience bearing witness."—ROMANS 2: 15.

We learned in our third lesson that God had made man in His own image and so gave His children a life far grander than mere creature or animal existence. Man has superior intellectual powers and a wonderful capacity of determining moral actions and of making moral choices. Solomon calls this the "spirit of man," and likens it to a candle or lamp which God has given him. St. Paul calls it "conscience." So it is by the possession of this inward "lamp of Jehovah" which we know as "conscience" that man is lifted high above the lower orders of creation, for by it he becomes morally responsible for his motives and actions. A little child is the only living creature whose education includes the "*ought*" of things. A boy trains his dog to perform, but he never sits down with him and talks to him about the right and wrong of the performance. The dog learns to do what his master wants done, and dogs are very clever, but no dog knows anything about moral motive behind anything he does. He has learned that if he does his "trick" he will please his master and will likely get a piece of cake or a bit of meat, and that if he does not he will be apt to get "cuffed," but he does not think on any high moral plane about the reason behind the act itself. A boy is very different to a dog inasmuch as the boy can distinguish between moral motives, and if he is a Christian boy will do right because it is *right*, not because he is afraid of the consequences that will follow by way of penalty if he leaves it undone. Some people want to be good enough to go to Heaven

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when they die, but a real Christian wants to be good for the sake of goodness itself, and that he may be like Christ. A great truth you must become familiar with in your thinking is that the moral quality of an action lies in the intention of the doer. So we should always do right for its own sake not because we fear some dreadful punishment if we leave it undone, or do wrong. In what way can Conscience help us in this? Let us see.

WHAT CONSCIENCE IS.

Many definitions of conscience have been given, but perhaps the best one for our younger boys and girls is this. It is easily understood. "Conscience is that in me which says I ought or ought not." Older boys and girls can think out this one, "Conscience is that power of mind by which moral law is discovered to each individual for the guidance of his conduct." We can all appreciate the way a dear little girl explained it, when after her mother had been talking to her about it, she said, "It is Jesus whispering to our hearts." Young people do not like definitions and we do not want to give them, but unless we understand as well as we can what conscience is and how it works, we shall make sad mistakes in our lives. Get it clear in your mind, that conscience embraces these four things:

1. Knowledge of right and wrong.
2. Judgment on an action as being either right or wrong.
3. Conviction that right ought always and wrong ought never to be done.
4. Feeling of pleasure or pain that follows the doing of right or wrong.

You can reason these out quite readily if you think each one over in turn, and you know you must learn to think for yourself.

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WHAT CONSCIENCE DOES.

We must notice that the "witness" of conscience that St. Paul speaks about, is everywhere. If you carefully read Romans 2: 12-16, you may not understand all that the Apostle Paul meant, but this much you will see, that the testimony of conscience is universal and persistent. That means that all over the world and always, mankind has some knowledge of God. It is very crude with some people, others have it in larger measure, but though its light may be very dim, the "lamp of Jehovah" that Solomon spoke of is burning everywhere and the "witness" of conscience of which Paul wrote, is being given all the time. If God's written word has not gone to all people His unwritten law stamped on the human mind and heart is universal, and those who do not know the Truth, as we have learned it in Jesus Christ, will be judged according to the measure of truth they have. Read Romans 2: 15.

OBEYING CONSCIENCE.

You will have learned from this that to obey conscience means more to us as Christians than it does to those who do not know Christ. How is this? Follow the steps again. A Christian boy can tell right from wrong, he chooses right because his conscience tells him that right ought always and wrong ought never to be done, *but he learns what right is from his great Teacher, Christ.* Conscience does not always tell people what the right is. So the universal "witness" of conscience, the light of the inward "lamp" is not enough. We need Christ to make the Truth known. Christ is called the Revealer because it is through Him that the Father, God, is revealed or made known. Jesus told that in such words as you will find in Matthew 11: 27 or Luke 10: 22. If the universal "witness" had

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been enough Christ would not have come, but men's knowledge of God is very poor and mistaken and unsatisfactory without the Truth as it is in Jesus. That is the first great reason why we should support the Missionary Cause. The world can never know what they need, without Christ, for not conscience but Christ teaches what right is.

It is not enough, therefore, to say we are conscientious in what we do. We must be *right*, and some people have been very conscientious who have done very wrong things. Some of the most cruel deeds ever performed have been done in the name of conscience. Saul of Tarsus thought he was right in persecuting the early Christians. He was following his conscience, for he had been taught to hate the new religion and was very bitter against all who accepted it. But when he came to know Christ he was very sorry for what he had done and entirely changed his whole life when he found out his terrible mistake. Conscience is a safe guide to a young Christian when it leads him to a fuller knowledge of his Lord and Master. Conscience is like a clock, but Christ is the sun. The sun, not the clock, is the real standard of time, and the clock is of value only when it is in accord with the sun. So it is necessary that we shall use our conscience, guard it carefully, *and* keep it right with Christ, if we would have it as a safe guide to life. When it is so kept it fills us with great gladness in doing right and makes us happy in approving our deeds done in the Master's name. There is no greater blessing for a young Christian to-day than that which Paul desired for Timothy, "love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned." What a beautiful life shall be ours if we possess these. And we may. Let us be satisfied with nothing less.

XIII.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND THE SABBATH.

"And God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it."
—GENESIS 2: 3.

"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy."—
EXODUS 20: 8.

"The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath, so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath."—MARK 2: 27, 28.

There are few questions that are so often asked by the young and few to which more answers are given than how to keep the Sabbath Day. The three short passages given above should be memorized and their meaning understood. They tell us something about three very important matters: (1) The origin of the Sabbath, (2) Its perpetual existence, (3) The supreme authority as to observing it. A simple re-statement may be made thus: God made the Sabbath, for man to observe forever, according to the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. This brings us face to face with our obligations as Christians and should remove all doubt and controversy from the question.

GOD MADE THE SABBATH.

Jesus did not make the Sabbath. Neither did Moses. God made it. The story of creation tells us that when God had finished His work at the end of six days, He rested on the seventh. The Sabbath was at the beginning a day of rest. The law of the Sabbath is not an arbitrary decree of the Almighty, but is one that is written in the human body. Man must have physical rest or his body will suffer. The Sabbath is a time in which the very intricate machinery of the body may recuperate and man's energies be kept up

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to their full strength. Scientific men who have studied the need of our bodies agree on this and we all know it for ourselves. The setting apart of the seventh day by the Creator, therefore, was a gracious provision which He in His infinite wisdom made for man's physical well-being as well as his moral benefit. We have already learned that to "hal'ow" means to make holy, and when God made the Sabbath and "hallowed" it He set it apart from the ordinary uses of a day to serve a special and sacred purpose. We are to remember to "keep it holy."

MAN IS TO KEEP THE SABBATH.

The Sabbath was not made for a little while nor for a few people. It was made for all people and for all time, because all need it and will always need it. We must keep it not just because God said so, but because we shall violate the laws of our physical natures if we do not keep it, and our bodies shall lose in health, strength and vital power. Moses, the great Jewish lawgiver, knew this, and he gave the sixth commandment accordingly. And with the need of physical rest he emphasized man's need of worship. When we think of the purpose of the Sabbath we cannot but think of God's goodness, and the day becomes one of religious meditation and prayer. Our need of worship is as great as our need of rest, and Moses wanted above everything else that the people should remember and serve God.

In the days of our Lord the Pharisees often accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath, by doing many things that according to their 'laws were not allowed. They did not know the real spirit of the Sabbath law that Go' had written so long before Moses, nor did they accept the interpretation of that law as shown by Jesus in the way He spent the day.

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HOW JESUS SPENT THE SABBATH.

In several parts of the gospels we are told how Jesus passed the day, and we may be sure that if we spend it in a similar spirit and manner we shall not displease Him, for "the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath," and He is our great Example because we are Christians.

1. *Worship and Teaching.* From Luke 4: 16 we learn that "he entered, *as his custom was*, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read." The synagogue was the place where religious instruction was given to the people. To-day we have churches and Sunday Schools. So we see clearly that all followers of Christ should spend part of every Sabbath day in this double exercise, worship and study, in the House of God. Young Christians should form the same "custom" or *habit* that is mentioned of their great Teacher, and not allow themselves to be absent from the appointed place of instruction. In Luke 4: 31 we find Jesus doing the same at Capernaum that He did at Nazareth. Wherever He was He attended the synagogue services. He loved to teach. Here is a lesson for all Christian teachers to-day. Preaching or teaching is a delight not a drudgery if the Spirit of Christ is in the heart. The example of Jesus is a challenge to every Christian to attend the church services, wherever they may be, for the worship of God and instruction in the Scriptures. They are not following Him if they remain away.

2. *Healing the sick.* In Mark 1 or Luke 4 you will find account of many kinds of people suffering from various diseases that Jesus healed on the Sabbath. It was this particularly that made the Pharisees angry and brought their violent opposition against Him. But Jesus told them that it was quite lawful to do good on the Sabbath. So if you see a way by which you can help some one who is in suffering or need it is

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quite right to do it; but do not make the mistake that many have made of putting off until Sunday what you should have done on some earlier day of the week. Do not remain away from church to pay a visit to a sick person. Go to church and visit the sick besides. That is what Jesus did. Even visiting the sick is no good reason for not going to church.

3. *Home Intercourse.* Even in the synagogue Jesus went "into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John" (Mark 1: 29). If we only knew just how He spent the afternoon we would likely see them resting or hear their conversation on whole-some topics. We may be very certain they did not spend the afternoon in frivolous talk but in helpful ministries. After Jesus healed the grandmother of her fever, we may rest assured the talk was cheerful, and that they were all a very happy company in Peter's family circle. So the Christian Sabbath should be a day of happy home association, and anything that takes people away from home, especially for pleasure, on that day is not good. The family should be helped by coming together for part of the day at least in happy helpful social intercourse.

4. *Private Prayer.* Jesus did not forget that. In the night-time when the disciples were sleeping He went alone with His Father for quiet meditation and communion. If He needed private prayer to strengthen Him for the work and to keep Him calm amid the worries of the morrow, surely we cannot get along without it. The Sabbath should prepare us for every duty coming with the dawn of Monday morning.

These are not all the things Jesus did on the Sabbath, but they are enough to show us the general spirit and manner in which we should spend the day, and if we follow Him we shall do well, and the Sabbath will be truly "the Lord's Day."

XIV.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND HIS PARENTS.

"And he went down with them and came to Nazareth; and he was subject to them."—LUKE 2: 51.

"Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."—EPHESIANS 6: 1.

A right relation between parents and children is of the utmost importance because it involves on the parents' part a recognition of the Divine Fatherhood and the establishment of the home as a part of the Heavenly Father's household. This ensures harmony, peace, unity, fellowship, community of interests, social ministry, partnership in duty, and the display of those beautiful qualities that ripen in full fruition in the Heavenly Home. We may be sure that the humble home at Nazareth where the family of Joseph lived, was built after this plan, and certainly the desire expressed by the Apostle Paul in his letter was for such home life among the Christians at Ephesus. This book being for the young, the aim of our present study is to show how Christian boys and girls may contribute in their homes, as Jesus did in His, to just such a happy and beautiful family life.

OBEDIENCE.

What is meant when we read that Jesus was "subject" to His parents? Study the word. "Subject" means to "set in array under," and the meaning clearly is that Jesus the boy set or arranged His life under the direction or supervision of His parents. It does not mean that His parents put Him under so much as it means that Jesus put Himself under them. True obedience on the part of a Christian son or daughter

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at home means doing just what Jesus did. It is the first and most binding duty of children to "sub-ject" themselves to their parents for true obedience "in the Lord."

AT HOME.

Living at Nazareth might not have been just as pleasant as at Jerusalem, but Nazareth was home because "home is where the heart is," whether it be in a lowly village cottage or in a splendid city mansion. There seems to be a beautiful suggestion in the statement "he went down with them," for they show that Jesus after all would sooner be with His parents at home than be anywhere else without them. Many boys have made a big mistake by their impatience at home and by wanting to get away from it too soon. Girls, too, have become dissatisfied and have wanted to leave home for some other place where they looked for larger liberty and an easy time. Be in no hurry to leave the old home nest, for the big outside world has no friends like father and mother, and there are no comforts and joys to be compared with those you may have in the fellowship of your own family circle.

FATHER AND MOTHER.

"He was subject to *them*." "Children, obey your *parents*." Notice the plural form. Both parents—"Father and Mother"—are named in the fifth commandment. You will see the importance of our studying this when you remember that children do not always hold both parents in reverent regard. Boys do not always obey mother as they do father, and girls do not always love their fathers as they do their mothers. Sometimes it is the other way about. There is something noble about Jesus when we think of Him helping in the carpenter's shop, and we do

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not believe He ever refused to assist His mother in the household chores. You may see how this worked out in His later life. He would never have enjoyed such intimate fellowship with His Heavenly Father if He had been untrue to His earthly one. He would never have felt towards His mother as He did when He hung upon the cross if He had neglected her when He was a boy. It is a very beautiful story that we read in John 19: 26, 27. By the cross with some other faithful and loving women stood the mother of Jesus. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home." One of the very last things Jesus did, you see, was to provide for His mother.

From these lessons in the shop and home, our young people should be taught to regard even lowly toil as honorable, and our boys especially, to hold women in reverence. They called Joseph "only a carpenter" and Jesus "the carpenter's son"; but Jesus was never ashamed of having worked with His hands in what the world esteemed a humble sphere. He always had a warm place in His heart for the toilers, and His followers must both work themselves and hold all labor in honorable esteem. The other lesson is one in chivalry. Every boy should reverence his mother, and if he does not he cannot grow up with a true Christian knight's chivalrous regard for womanhood. There is something very beautiful in these words of John Wesley, whose mother lived until he was 39 years of age, "I cannot remember ever having kept back a doubt from my mother. She was the one heart to whom I went in absolute confidence from my babyhood until the day of her death." Happy mother with such a son, blessed son with such a mother!

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SPIRIT OF OBEDIENCE.

The true spirit of obedience is love. If we obey simply because we *must* we shall not know the true joys that always follow a filial action. We obey our parents, therefore, on the ground of our sonship not because we are compelled or driven to obedience. If we were animals only we might be made to obey our owners, if we were slaves we might be driven to do our masters' commands, if we were hirelings we would expect to be paid for our services; but because we are sons and daughters we obey on the ground of filial affection and not by compulsion or for pay. Such love includes gratitude. Think of what you owe your parents for the expression of their love to you, shown when you were a weak and feeble baby unable to help yourself. If they had not watched over you and provided for your wants day and night you would have died in your infancy. In a thousand ways they have proved their love for you, and if you appreciate it you will surely love them in return. That is what is meant by the words, "We love because he first loved us." If we *think* much of the love of God we will be drawn out to love Him, and if we *think* much about the love of our parents we will hold them in such reverent regard that the whole affection of our hearts will go out to them in return. "Think" and "Thank" are from the same root word. A thoughtful boy will not be a thankless son. A truly grateful daughter is always one who remembers her debt to her parents. It is not an unthinking obedience that our Heavenly Father desires, but the obedience of thoughtful and thankful children. It is true also that the more we obey the more we will love. So the *habit* of obedience will be easy if the *spirit* of obedience is in our hearts, and when God sends the spirit of His Son into us we do not find it either difficult or unpleasant to follow Him.

XV.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND HIS HABITS.

"And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."—1 TIM. 4: 12.

A habit is a practice that we have formed by frequently doing the same thing over and over. The way we act day by day, the line of conduct we follow, even the very thoughts we think and the words we speak are decided by habit. By doing a thing time after time it becomes our custom so that after a while we may do it almost unconsciously. Life is largely made up of habits, and the ones we form when we are young are those that are most likely to remain with us after we are grown up. You have heard elderly people say they "got the habit" when they were boys or girls, and that they are "too old to change now." It has long been a proverb, "You cannot teach an old dog new tricks." That is why a boy starts to train a puppy. You know the other proverb, "As the twig is bent the tree inclines." Because of that, when a tiny sapling is planted in an orchard a stake is often driven in by its side to keep it firm and growing straight. Many things prove how important it is that boys and girls, who are in what we call the "habit-forming period" should be very careful to get into the right way of living day by day.

PREVENTION BETTER THAN CURE.

Learn this truth right at the start. The best way to avoid the formation of bad habits is to form good ones. Do you recall the words "Overcome evil with good?" Not by trying to know all the bad habits you should not form, but by increasing the number of your good habits is the easiest way to live so that the principle of the Memory verse will be obeyed day by day. If

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we want our words and deeds and the whole of life as it is summed up in the word "whatsoever" to be acceptable to the Lord Jesus, we must form the habit of making His standard of living ours every day. If we do that we shall not form a lot of bad habits to correct or break when older. Some people seem to think that it is harder for a boy or girl to form a good habit than a bad one, but it ought not to be so, and if we start early enough and do it often enough the good will be a great deal stronger than the evil, and we shall find it easier by far to grow a good character from the beginning than to correct a bad one towards the end of life.

LINEs OF HABIT.

We are not going to make a long list of things that Christian boys and girls should not do, but it will help us see how the little things of every day enter into and after all make up life. There are only two general lines we are now going to study, along which the habits of the young are for the most part formed. They are Thinking and Doing.

Thinking. Long ago Solomon said of a man "as he thinketh within himself so is he." Because he knew the power of thought the Apostle Paul named a lot of good things on which to think. He advised thinking about things that were "true," "honorable," "just," "pure," "lovely," "of good report," and he said that if Christians in Philippi would "do" these things after thinking on them, they would enjoy the inward peace of God. It is as true to-day as it was in the days of Paul and the church at Philippi. There is no other way for us. We must think pure thoughts if we would have pure hearts, we must think high thoughts if we would have noble characters. No loose thinking will do if you want to be a strong Christian. It is in our solitary minutes when we are alone that thinking

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most helps or injures us. Be careful of your thought therefore, and especially when there is nobody with you. Get the habit of clean, clear, straight thinking if you would live a clean, clear, straight life.

What most influences the thoughts of young folk to-day? If you study this question you will perhaps agree that it is what they *see*, what they *hear*, what they *say*, what they *read*, and what they *do*. Look at these. How easily the eye affects and influences the thought! That is why a young Christian should not look on ugly or vile pictures. Their influence is always vicious whether they are in a book, on a sign-board, a wall, or the screen of a moving-picture house. The time will come when what our boys and girls *see* will be of as much concern to their elders as what they eat. Keep your eyes open to all beautiful pictures whether in nature or in art, but avoid all others and never point them out to other boys or girls. So with what we *hear*. Keep your ears open for anything that is good and useful but if you know someone is telling an impure story, no matter how funny it may seem, turn away, do not listen even though you may be called prudish. We must be careful of what we *say*. Boys and girls on the playground will sometimes use words that they would not speak in the kitchen or parlor at home. Swearing is a dreadful habit. Slang is very harmful. Avoid both. Cultivate the habit of clean speech as you do of clean thinking, and do not forget that even if nobody hears you say a bad word, you hear yourself and if you lose your own self-respect you will lose the most valuable possession a person can have in this world. Take care of what you *read*. Books that interest do not always edify. But there are plenty that do both, and they should be in every home. They are as necessary for the mind as food is for the body.

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Read them, own them, make presents of them, but bad books avoid as you would poison, for that is what they are. So we come to the result of our thinking in doing.

Doing. Where and in what are young folk most busy in the actual doing of things every day? At *home*. Have you a room of your own or do you share one with a brother or sister? In either case keep it tidy and neat. Have "a place for everything and everything in its place." Do you help mother? Doing "chores" is not always pleasant, but a Christian home is a place where all the members share in the joy and the service of the family. Do your part. Do not **grumble**. Be polite. Christ was a gentleman always. Home is the best place to show the true virtues of Christianity. Be saving. Waste nothing whether of food or money or time. Be careful of your clothes. This includes boys as well as girls. A soldier son wrote home to his mother: "My socks are lasting fine. They don't hurt my feet. As soon as I see a little hole I darn it with the yarn you sent me." That was splendid. Mind the little holes. Be industrious, and what you learn at home will serve you well years afterward.

At *school*. Do you go to school? Then be on time. Always be punctual and prompt to the call of the bell or the rule of the teacher. Have your lessons prepared. Help the teacher every way you can. On the playground, play fair, keep your temper, be agreeable, help the little fellows, be honest. So as all these "little things," which our next lesson will teach us are not little things at all, enter into your life now you will become strong to do your part for God in the big world for which He is preparing you as you grow. As a young Christian, learn now that all the "what-soever" things that enter into your life may be done for Christ Jesus your Lord.

XVI.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND FAITHFULNESS.

"He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."—LUKE 16: 10.

Our last lesson was largely about what we generally term little things. This one is to show that in the thought of Jesus nothing is small or insignificant that is prompted by right motive. He did not value human actions as many others did when He was on the earth, and there are too many people still who do not estimate the activities of life according to His standard or scale of values. This really means that one of the most important lessons for young Christians to learn is that while man may look upon the outward or visible appearance the Lord trieth the heart or invisible and inward motive. We must never lose sight of what we have already learned that it is motive that determines the worth of any act we may perform.

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It is, therefore, as important for a young Christian to ask "Why?" as to ask "What?" in the doing of an action. Here are five short words that will help every boy and girl to understand how life is made up. *Am, Know, Can, Ought, Will*. Say them over of yourself and think about each one and its meaning, "I am" (being), "I know" (knowledge), "I can" (ability), "I ought" (moral responsibility), "I will" (volition). These short words in proper relation make up Christian personality. A human being is the only creature on earth to whom they all apply. A Christian boy says of any action that comes before him, "I will because I ought," or "I will not because I ought not." He may not

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say these words, of course, but he thinks them, and the result of his choice or willing to do one way or the other makes his action right or wrong. You can see now that nothing is small that calls one to such an important decision.

Some doubtless thought that Daniel and his companions were foolish and standing for a trifling matter when they made up their minds not to eat the rich food provided for them in the great king's palace, but their resolution was made because a great principle was involved. Daniel knew that he *ought* not and so he resolved that he *would* not. Anything that involves a young person in "ought" or "ought not" is so important that it deserves intelligent thought and then firm decision. Nothing is ever a small thing that calls a boy or girl to choose to do right or wrong. That is the way we are all brought face to face with the true standard of life, and being true to the right is faithfulness.

Think of this principle in the discharge of what we call little duties. It is easy to say, "That doesn't matter, it is only a little thing," or to put it off when we should do it, by saying, "That can wait, it doesn't amount to much anyway." Not only young folk but their elders too, have made mistakes many times in this way. Perhaps there is no other way in which we err so often. Bear in mind that no duty is small or trifling, but that it calls for prompt attention and willing performance. No one can be faithful who fails to do his duty no matter where or what it may be. Faithfulness, then, is found in doing what we ought to do, when it should be done, and in the best way we have the ability or power to do it. Mark the last statement for it means that we will *do our best* every time. We may not be able to do things as well as our elders, but it is not they who are doing it. It is not fair to compare a boy's work with a man's or a girl's with a

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woman's. God does not compare what one person does with what other people do, but He judges what each one does by the power that one possesses. I am not responsible if another does not do his best, but I am responsible for doing my best myself. Living up to our best is faithfulness. When a young Christian can say as he examines his own heart, "I tried to do my best," he may be very sure that his Lord will say, "Faithful!"

RESULTS OF FAITHFULNESS.

There are many, but if you will think of two you will do well. Not in the future life after we have left this earth, but here and now we may have them. It is a mistake to think that God rewards us for being faithful, only after we die. Every day brings splendid results. The two we have in mind for you are: 1. You will get stronger by doing. 2. You will be fitted for larger service.

1. *Growing Strong.* Every power strengthens by exercise. We learned that in our second lesson. We must remember it here. So, when you are face to face with right or duty and wish you were stronger to do it, say to yourself "Everything I can do, I can do better next time if I do my best this time." That is as true of the will to choose as it is of the muscles to move. Our ability to do things increases as we do well the work we have in hand. In moral as well as in physical exercise it is the use we make of our powers that decides whether we shall grow stronger or weaker. One splendid result, therefore, of being "faithful in a very little" is that we grow strong and become able to do "much." On the other hand if we do wrong this time it will be easier to do wrong again the next time. Our wills become weakened and we go down instead of up in the moral scale. There is an old

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proverb which says, "He that despiseth small things shall fall by little and little. Beware of the *little* lies, the *little* compromises with conscience, the *little* acts of disobedience, the *little* deflections from right, the *little* postponements of duty, for all these count for much in the making of our characters. Only what we really are is of moment in the sight of God.

2. *Being fitted for larger Service.* As a student you know that the reward of study is more study. You cannot be educated in any other way. And the reward of work is more work. God wants us to be efficient workers. Christ did not call and say to you, "Follow Me," simply to make you good. He wants you to be useful, and goodness apart from service is not to be thought of. Our next lesson will explain that. The best way to become a really efficient adult worker is to serve an apprenticeship in the Church while young. The Church needs willing and capable men and women for work, and unless the boys and girls learn to work while they are boys and girls they will not be ready for the larger spheres of usefulness that may await them ten or twenty years from now. No factory hand learns the trade all at once. A skilful mechanic has been learning how to use his tools or machines for years, and those who can turn out the best work are the ones that have best work to do. It is not different in the Church. If you would be "a good servant of Jesus Christ," or "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," when you are grown up, do what you can now and always do your best. Then all through life there will be true joy for you in working for the Master, and when the work-day of earth is ended and the clock strikes the hour of rest, He will say, "*Well Done Good and Faithful Servant.*" To be your best and do your best at all times for Jesus Christ is faithfulness. *Be faithful.*

XVII

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND TEMPERANCE.

"And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things."—1 COR. 9: 25.

Because of the restricted meaning commonly given to the word "temperance," our young people have learned to apply it solely to total abstinence from the use of strong drink. But it includes much more than that, and the substitution of the word "self-control" in the revised version of the New Testament, opens up the way for a much clearer and more comprehensive study of this essential virtue by the young Christian.

WHAT IS SELF-CONTROL?

Reference to the Memory verse will help us understand. Every young person knows that in all athletic contests strength and "staying power" are as important as natural agility or quickness of movement. We all know something about the physical discipline that St. Paul refers to as a part of the training process. If a long-distance runner is going to "endure to the end" he must be at his very best when the race starts, and he cannot be this if he has not brought his body up to the highest stage of fitness. All boys know what it means to be "fit." So St. Paul reasons that if athletes practice hard discipline to win a race where the prize is a wreath of ivy or laurel, we who are running in the long race of life and expect to receive an incorruptible or unfading crown at its close, should learn how to practice the art of self-control so that we shall have strength and endurance for all that is ahead of us on the way. What then, is temperance or self-control and how is the young Christian to practice it?

Self-control in any young Christian, means *the*

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control of the animal appetite and passions by the power of the will, under the guidance of conscience and with the help of God. It is the rule of the higher over the lower forces of our natures by the supremacy of the spiritual over the physical. St. Paul had it in mind for Timothy when he wrote, "Flee also youthful lusts and follow after righteousness . . ." (2 Tim. 2: 22). St. Peter had it in mind when he wrote "Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2: 11), and in Romans 6: 12 this very important exhortation is given, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey the lusts thereof."

We all have natural desires that are in themselves perfectly proper and right, and which will make us strong and "fit" if they are rightly met, but which on the other hand will do us great harm if they are not. When these natural desires are indulged in any way that conscience condemns they become sinful, and it is the function or office of the will to repress or restrain them so that they will not be allowed to lead us into evil.

HOW TO LEARN SELF-CONTROL.

There is really only one way and that is by *practice*. Whenever you feel an appetite for what you know in your conscience is not for your real good, say "No" to the desire and "Yes" to conscience. Of course self-gratification is pleasant and self-denial is hard, but in this as in other duties the old adage is true, "Practice makes perfect." Take *eating* for instance. Every healthy boy and girl needs a lot of wholesome food, but eating too much leads to gluttony. Take *temper*. There is no finer or more valuable part of us than this, but if we cannot control it it runs away with us and leads into all kinds of foolish and wicked words and deeds. One of the most necessary things for either boy or girl is

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temper, but without the exercise of the will, under the guidance of conscience and with the help of God, it may become our worst enemy. You understand how this is, and can see for yourself the need of controlling it. Never be sorry that you have a "strong temper," but seek by God's help to be strong enough to control your temper.

Think of *amusement*. It is as natural and right for a boy or girl to want to play, to have lots of fun, to enjoy healthful recreation as it is for the lambs to frisk in the meadows or the calves and colts to run and race in the fields. God meant us to play that we might learn how to work. But if a boy wants to be playing all the time and if this desire leads him to play truant from school or to absent himself from home when mother or father needs him, you see that is sure to do him harm instead of good. The body, as we have learned, is given us to be our servant and we must learn to keep it strong and clean and holy if we would be at our best and come into our best inheritance as men and women. Pleasures that help us do this are good, but if they mean waste of time, disobedience to parents, failure to master school lessons, or in any way digress from what our consciences tell us we ought to do, they are not good. The same is true of *reading*. Every young Christian should read, but too much novel reading, or indeed thoughtless reading of any kind, will not only weaken the moral nature but sap the mental powers so that when you are grown up you will not be able to do the hard thinking that will face you in the stern affairs of life. So with the *imagination*. It is a splendid and a perfectly correct thing for boys and girls to "build castles in the air." We would not give much for a boy or girl that did not. These air-castles are your ideals and you will know more about them by

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and by. But if you allow your thoughts to bring up before you impure pictures, evil suggestions will be sure to follow and secret sins may work you ruin that will be very terrible. So the will must say "No" to every evil thought, and only as it does so will you know what "self-control" is. There is no vice that destroys that you cannot overcome with God's help if your will is guided by conscience and you use it every day in choosing right and refusing wrong.

If you will think over all the heroes of Bible history you will find that they have been self-controlled men and women. If you study the records of those who have gone wrong you will find that it was because they lost control of their appetites and passions and were led into sinful ways. The splendid stories of Joseph and Daniel show us how true heroes are made. The sad histories of Samson and Absalom tell how strong men may lose their power and become slaves of their lower natures. Wherever you look you will find that the dire results of pride, deceit, dishonesty, anger, avarice, envy, sensuality, intemperance, and every other vice, have been brought about largely by lack of "self-control," and that the shining virtues of the highest womanhood and the noblest manhood have come from daily practising it. If the man would not become a slave of tobacco, let the boy never use a cigarette; if the woman would never be the slave of folly let not the girl be frivolous and vain; if both would be free from the awful results of drunkenness in coming days let them neither touch, taste, or handle strong drink to-day. A young Christian who practices self-control is in no danger of being a slave to any of the vile passions we have named above, but will surely become a beautiful character showing forth the loveliness of the heavenly virtues that were all so fully revealed in the life and example of Jesus Christ our Lord.

XVIII.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND SERVICE.

"I am in the midst of you as he that serveth."—
LUKE 22: 27.

"Through love be servants one to another."—GAL.
5: 13.

To work for another as a servant is not generally considered a very noble employment. It is a great mistake, however, to associate service with degradation or drudgery. Work is honorable, and when it is done faithfully, no matter what the occupation may be, is worthy of the best efforts of the worker. To be a servant in the light of Christ's example is the greatest and best proof of nobility. The disciples did not understand how He whom they called "Teacher and Lord" could so humble Himself that He offered to wash their feet when they came in dusty and tired from a long walk on the country roads. But if you will read the story in John 13, especially verses 12 to 17, you will see what He meant to teach them. He gave them a new idea of service, and if we are going to be His disciples we must have the same spirit and show it by being "servants one to another."

WHAT IS SERVICE?

When we follow Christ's spirit we will be glad to serve because we see that service means to render help by our good offices to those who need assistance, to administer or contribute to the wants of any who are in need, to do for someone else what he cannot do for himself as well as we can do for him. This is more than being a hired assistant who works for pay. Of course it is true that "he that worketh receiveth wages," but the first thought with the Christian is not "How much am I going to get for what I do?"

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but "How much am I going to give by what I do?" Serving just for the wages makes one a hireling and does not produce the best work or lead to the greatest results. That is why Christian service does not wait to bargain for reward or wages, but is willing and cheerful because it is done in the name and spirit of Christ. The young Christian learns to serve readily because he loves to do as nearly like his "Teacher and Lord" as he has the opportunity and power to do. Learn first, therefore, that the motive of Christian service is Love; love to Christ and love to our fellows.

SPHERES OF SERVICE.

Service to the young Christian does not mean as much as it will in a few years when he has become a full grown man. But it is a mistake to think that boys and girls cannot actually serve in the spirit of Christ while they are young. And we must not forget that if boys and girls do not learn the right spirit and practice in serving one another while they are boys and girls they will have a lot to unlearn and find it no easy matter either, before they can serve as men and women. There are several spheres of service always calling for helpers, and there is a place for young Christians in them all now just as truly as there will be a place for them when they have outgrown their youth and are men and women.

These principal spheres of service are *Home, School, Church, Community, Country, World.*

1. *Home.* We have had a lesson on our relation to our parents, but there are others for us to consider. We have learned that just as parents and children work together in love will the home be made happy and beautiful. In homes where there are brothers and sisters there is abundant room for them all to serve one another in love. When this spirit prevails it prevents fault-finding, tale-bearing, cross and unpleasant words,

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unhappy quarrels, and a lot of trouble that should never be in a Christian family. In a home where there are employed helpers the children sometimes treat them with but little respect and call them "only servants." This is not Christian, for it is as noble to do housework as to build houses. So, if our homes are to be Christian in reality as well as just in name we must all work together in the spirit of mutual helpfulness.

2. *School.* Think how much easier it would be for the teacher if all the pupils were really willing to help. Think how much more pleasant it would be for the whole school or class if kindness and good cheer and the mind to work bound all together as one body. Think how the little children would find their tasks lighter and their lessons easier to learn if the big boys and girls were ready to assist them over the hard places. In all the life of boys and girls there is no place where the true spirit of social Christianity can be so often or so well shown as at school. Make it your sphere of daily service to your fellow pupils and to the teacher.

3. *Church.* Remember what we have learned about the Church. Having begun the preparation for larger usefulness when you have grown up by uniting publicly with the Church, take every opening to do the duties of membership. But do not be satisfied with just being a member and going to the services. There are old people you may visit, there are sick people to whom you may take flowers, there are troubled people whom you may cheer; there are many ways open to the young Christian who wants to serve. And all of you belong to some class or society in the Church. Whatever it is, remember it is yours for service, for it is not enough to be good, you must be of good use. The ministry of even a little child has often been blessed of God to a very large degree and in gracious measure.

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4. *Community.* For boys and girls that means now the circle of their companions and friends. It will grow into a whole neighborhood after a time, and they will know better what it means. But if the true community spirit is to be developed in the young they must be trained to serve the interests that first affect them in the narrower circle of their daily lives. Their pets must be tenderly and regularly cared for, they must be true to their chums, faithful to their friends, and reach out the helping hand to the poor and needy. Selfishness in the smaller circle will mean selfishness in the larger.

5. *Country.* Christian young people are patriots in the truest sense. To lack in reverence for our flag, to hold the laws in light esteem, to have little concern for our fellow citizens, to care little for the future of our country, is to show ourselves unworthy of the rights and privileges of citizenship. If we are going to have the right kind of citizens in Canada twenty years from now we must grow the right kind of men and women, and the only way to do that is to teach our growing youth how they may fit themselves for the discharge of later civic duties by learning to serve their country now. Study all you can about Canada, love it, be true to it, reverence the Union Jack, pray for the King and the Government, and as you can do your best for the good of all.

6. *World.* By this we mean all mankind. The world has need of teachers, of ministers, of missionaries, of deaconesses, of doctors, of nurses, of many kinds of workers. They will come from the ranks of the boys and girls who have learned to love Jesus and their fellows, so that they too shall say by and by just as their Master did, "I am in the midst of you as one that serveth." Learn now, therefore, to *serve one another in love.*

XIX.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND GIVING.

"First they gave their own selves to the Lord."—
2 Cor. 8: 5.

"God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 7.

We have been studying about many Christian graces and now we come to this, the grace of giving. Notice this at the very start of the study. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and said that just as they had faith, and knowledge, and earnestness and love, they must "abound in this grace also." Giving is not generally thought of as a grace but as a duty, not as a privilege but as an obligation. Because of this perhaps, some do not take as much pleasure in giving as they do in other Christian practices, but it is very clear from the teaching of the New Testament that no matter how many other graces we may possess we are incomplete if we lack this one. That is why we are taking a whole chapter to study it.

THE TRUE BASIS OF GIVING.

The true basis of acceptable giving is self-giving. Look at the first of our two Memory verses. When St. Paul tells how the Christians of Macedonia gave so much money for their poorer brethren in Jerusalem, he explained it by saying, "First they gave their own selves to the Lord." Their money was a part of themselves and was included in what they gave. Get this clear. Do you think people can give part of themselves to God and keep the rest from him? What happens if a boy says "I will give God my heart but not my time" or "I will give God Sunday but not the rest of the days of the week," or "I will give God my life but not my money." Does he not contradict himself? If God owns

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me does He not own *all* of me? Can I divide life up into parts and say of one "This is God's," or of another "This is my own?" We can all see readily that if it is true as the Apostle Paul says, "Ye are Christ's" it must mean that Christ owns and controls all that is included in our life whether physical being or material possessions—everything indeed that we are or have in ourselves or our property.

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE.

Christian liberality is therefore patterned after the example of our Lord. St. Paul says of Him, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8: 9). And he reasons that if we would be His sincere followers we must emulate Him in this grace of giving. Christ actually "*gave himself*," and in His Spirit we must be willing to give ourselves. In so doing we will pour out of our bounty to make others rich. Think of this as directly connected with giving money to God as a part of ourselves, to be used in His work. You will see that good wishes are not enough. Good intentions are not all. Prayers will not do everything. None of these in themselves will carry on the work of God. We may wish the cause well, we may pray for the Church, we may even intend to help some day; but we must give, actually practically *give* our money now to carry it on.

THE BLESSINGS OF GIVING.

These are many but we need not study them all. One great fact stands out before the young Christian. Giving is one of the most effective ways to develop Christian character. Giving is the crowning grace of the Christian because it is the practical proof of the highest excellence. Many Christians stunt their spiritual growth by a

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spirit of parsimony when their money is concerned. They would become bigger, broader, happier, nobler in soul if they knew more of the spirit of self-denial in the giving of money. It is not the amount we give but the spirit in which we give it that counts most in making us real followers of Christ—*like Him* in all we do. Some of the Christians of Macedonia had very little so they could not give much, but what they did give surprised Paul, and he commended them for both the amount and the spirit in which it was given. They were greatly blest in their own hearts by knowing that they had given not a great amount of money for the relief of their brethren in Jerusalem, but that what they had given was prompted by a great spirit of love. There is no such blessing as this.

How to Give.

Here we are met by the fact that many young Christians have nothing of their own to give. That shows a grave defect in parental training. Every child should have some money of his own from the earliest time when he knows what money is, and having it, he should be taught the proper use of it. It is a serious mistake for parents to omit this essential part of training. But boys and girls soon begin to have money of their own, and then it is that the true method of giving should be pointed out to them, that as Christian young people they may to the best of their ability, follow the example of their Master. There are two points we will do well to remember.

1. Give *Personally*. No one who loves Christ is or ever will be excused. Having only a little money makes no difference. Remember, you are *all* His. So parents should not give for their children but let the children give for themselves. Every one a contributor to God's Cause is the proper idea.

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2. Give on *Principle*. We have seen what that is—self-giving. Then it will not be hard to find some *system* that will best suit your circumstances. It is not best to tell everybody that they must give all in the same manner; but ordinarily people find it most convenient to give every Lord's Day. That was the method the apostle advised. If you give on principle it will not be difficult to decide what *proportion* of your money you should give. God does not expect all people, rich and poor, to give equal amounts. You remember the parable of the poor widow and her mite. Christ said she gave more than the rest because she gave all she had. The Jews of old were under obligation to give one-tenth to God. That might be a lot to a poor man and a very little to a man with millions to-day. The Christian does not count dollars so much as he counts opportunity, and then he gives *all he can*. If you give on principle you will give *promptly*, not deferring it until you have more. But if we only give when we feel like it, or because others do, or from a sense of shame for not giving, we shall not give as Jesus gave, or as the Macedonian Christians gave, or as the true liberal soul always gives. It will give us *pleasure* to give when we give on principle, and what is very important, we shall always have something to give. So it is a splendid thing for boys and girls to get the habit of putting aside as "Church money" or as "God's money," whatever they can, and then never using it for any other purpose. Then, when the time for the offering comes or occasion arises to help the poor and needy, they will have something on hand to give.

There is nothing harder for a miser to part with than his money, and if we would not grow up with miserly spirit and habits we must give now and give in the right way, as Christ gave and the Apostle Paul taught. "God loveth a cheerful giver."

XX.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN AND HIS FUTURE.

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 PETER 3: 18.

In looking into the future every young Christian may properly ask, "What kind of a follower of Christ shall I be in twenty or thirty years from now?" This lesson is intended to help them find an answer.

CHRIST THE STANDARD.

Notice the two words given to Jesus Christ in the Memory verse, "Lord and Saviour." The meaning of Saviour we learned early in the series, the force of the word "Lord" we shall learn now. To think of Jesus as saving us from sin is beautiful but it is not all. We are to make Him our Leader, our Sovereign, our King, our Lord and Master. The young Christian soon finds out that being a real genuine follower of Christ calls for a firm will and a strong purpose, and that it is not all easy going in the way of service. He knows that no cowardly spirit can succeed. Unless he can find someone who can hold him strong and true and help him to be the brave man he desires to be, he gets discouraged and soon falls behind from the ranks of Christ's soldiers. For that is a figure used by St. Paul. "As a good soldier of Jesus Christ," he desires Timothy to live every day. Christ must, therefore, come into the life of each young disciple with such heroic force of leadership that every nerve will thrill, every power be developed, every force and energy be employed in fighting the battle of self-conquest and then of world victory in His name. Christ and Christ only is the real Captain to lead the young to noble achievement as life passes by. He is Lord as well as Saviour.

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And being Lord, there is no other will guiding and directing all but His.

GROWING LIKE CHRIST.

When the Apostle Peter asks us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," he simply means for us to grow so that we may become full of Christ's beautiful spirit and disposition, resemble Him in the sweet graciousness of His character, and be led by Him to triumph and victory. Remember, it is not what Christ was twenty centuries ago when He walked and talked with men on the earth that is of greatest value to us but what He is now and here to-day. He must be our real living Leader or He will be of little worth to us. The question now becomes, "How can I come to know Him in these ways?" How do you get to know any person? Think that out. Here are five ways:

1. By *reading* all you can find about him. When you want to know about any great character in history you go to books written about him. Do the same with Jesus. The four Gospels should be your constant study. There are four different men giving four different accounts of the person in whom you are especially interested. Read, read again; study, study over and over what they have written. You cannot know Christ if you do not know what the Bible tells about Him. The Gospels are His story.

2. By *listening* to what others tell of him. There are old and wise Christian people all about you. They were students before you were born. Father and mother probably have told you many things about Christ, you have heard preachers proclaim Him, many times have you heard testimonies from your seniors. All these will help you find out more and more about Christ. Read and Listen!

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3. By *conversing* with Him personally. Do not think of Jesus as a dead man, but as a living Lord. Remember what He taught us about the Holy Spirit. Never forget what it is to pray. You may not see Him but you can none the less talk with Him, and what He says to you will be even better than what you read or hear from others. You cannot know Jesus if you never converse with Him and let Him converse with you.

4. By *living* with Him. We know those people most intimately with whom we daily live. You understand that. With some people you have only a "passing acquaintance." You meet them on the street, pass them with a pleasant nod or smile, but you do not really know them. When Jesus promised that He would make His abode with us, He meant that if we would let Him He would live in our hearts and abide with us all the time. That is a beautiful figure where of Him it is said, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me." Surely that is a wonderful way of knowing Him.

5. By *doing* like Him. That is one of the principal things Jesus meant when He said "Follow Me!" Not only "Come after me, be my disciples and let me teach you things, but *do like me!*" was His meaning. But can we do like Jesus? "No" if you mean just what Jesus did when He was here in His person. "Yes" if you mean what Jesus would have us do now He is here by His Spirit. Get it clearly fixed in your mind: A Christian is one who *does* what His Lord wants Him to do. Many men want to be Christians and many women would like to be Christians who are not willing to pay the price of Christianity. But no one can be His disciple who is not willing to take up His cross daily and

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follow Him. It may seem hard, but what is there in all the world worth having that is easy? But though it may be difficult it is possible. Jesus is more than our Perfect Example, He is more than our Lord and King, He is more than our Commander and Captain. He is our great *Empowerer*. Think of what Paul said and you will understand that word, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." There is no failure there. That is what is meant by taking Christ to be our Lord—to be able to make our Christianity a real victory over sin in ourselves and then in all the world. For it is not of ourselves alone we must think.

CHRIST IS LORD OF ALL.

In the struggle which is going on in the world of human society we are to be assured that there is no doubt of the final issue. Jesus is to be crowned "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," and all the nations of the earth are to own Him Sovereign. But to bring in that day He needs strong and mighty men, true and devoted women to work for Him in every sphere. There are battles against wrong to be fought and won, there are evils to be eradicated and sins to be purged, right is to be vindicated and justice to be established in the earth, His name is to be exalted among all people, and He calls on us to unite all our forces and use all our powers to bring in the happy day when all nations shall serve Him. You see that this is not work for weaklings but for strong and courageous souls, and such dear young friends you may be if you crown Jesus King in all your lives and say with all your hearts "Master I will follow thee where-soever thou goest." May you grow into lovely characters and prove yourselves to be true and faithful to your Lord and Saviour in all things.

